LITTLE THÉRÈSE

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St Thérèse of the Child Jesus as a First Communicant.

Frontispiece.

LITTLE THÉRÈSE

THE LIFE OF SŒUR THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX FOR CHILDREN

BY

PÈRE J. CARBONEL, S.J.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY A RELIGIOUS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CHILD JESUS

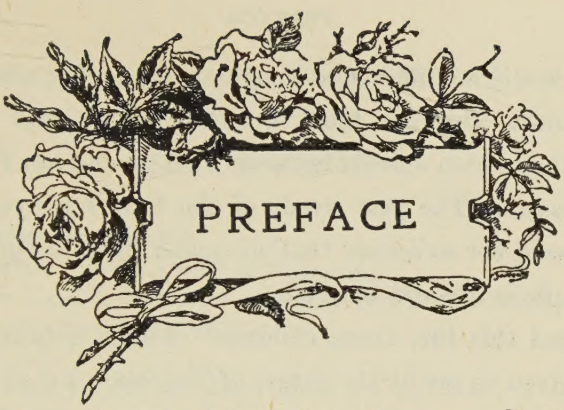
LONDON
BURNS OATES AND WASHBOURNE LTD.
PUBLISHERS TO THE HOLY SEE

NIHIL OBSTAT:
THOMAS MCLAUGHLIN, S.TH.D.,
Censor deputatus.

IMPRIMATUR:
EDM. CAN. SURMONT,
Vicarius generalis.

WESTMONASTERII,
Die 14a *Julii*, 1925.

Made and Printed in Great Britain



PREFACE

CHILDREN, this book is for you. It will tell you about the life of a child like yourselves who became very dear to Our Lord, and who has been placed by the Church in the ranks of the Saints. She did the same things that you do; the only difference was that she did them much better. She was very gay and full of fun, yet she never forgot that we cannot always be quite happy in this world, but must wait for perfect happiness in Heaven. Sometimes, too, she cried as you do, but she bore her little troubles bravely to atone for her childish faults and for the sins of others. She was even glad to suffer, because her model, the Holy Child, had suffered so much for her.

God gave little Thérèse very special gifts: a remarkably quick intelligence, deep power of affection, and great personal charm. But all these gifts are nothing in comparison with her deep love of God, and you can all imitate her in this.

It would be difficult to imagine more tender affection and more absolute trust between father and child than that which existed between Thérèse and her Father in Heaven. The first words of the Lord's Prayer had impressed her so deeply that she made them her guiding principle in life and in death.

Read this life, then, children. All its details have been given to me by the sisters of Thérèse. I shall often write down word for word what she wrote about herself, using her own expressions. It will help and encourage you in your efforts to be good, and you will soon learn to love its little heroine.

And you must try to talk to her. Do this and she will love you and send you some of her "roses," as she so sweetly called the graces God has given to her to shower down on us from Heaven.

J. C.

"O little ones, whom Jesus loves,
His Kingdom is for such as ye,
For like these pure and spotless doves
You win Him by simplicity."

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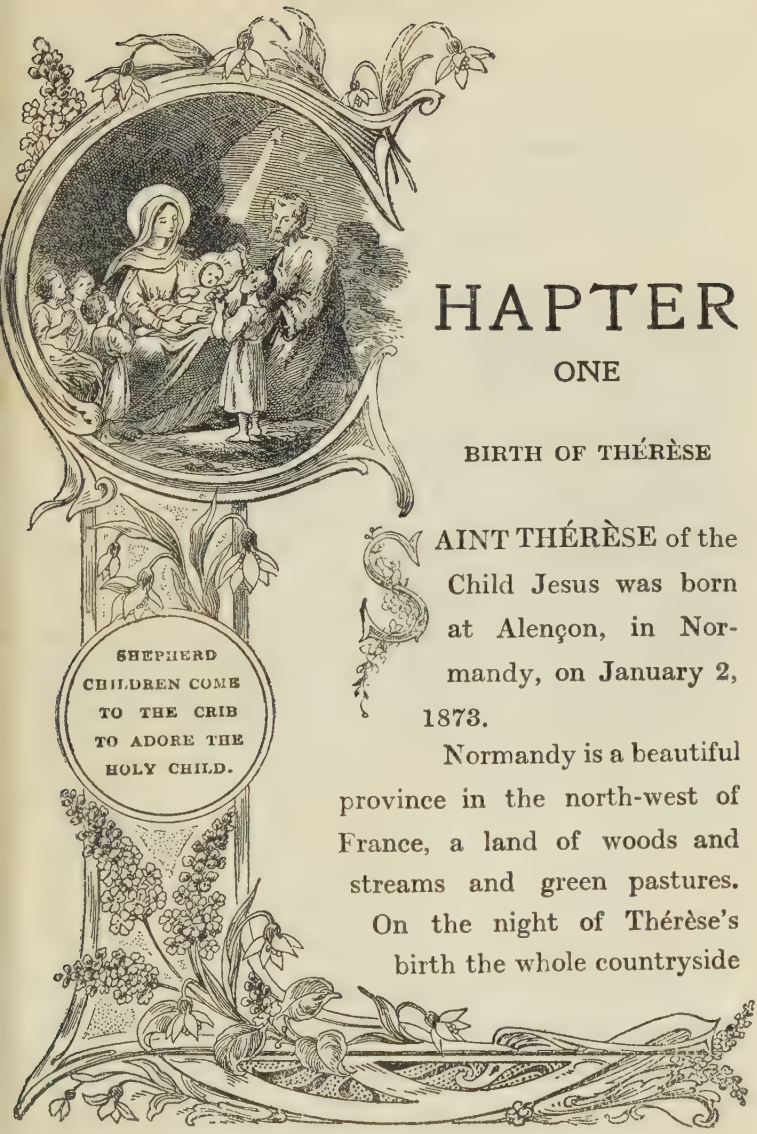


SHEPHERD CHILDREN COME TO THE CRIB TO ADORE THE HOLY CHILD.

CHAPTER ONE

BIRTH OF THÉRÈSE

SAINT THÉRÈSE of the Child Jesus was born at Alençon, in Normandy, on January 2, 1873.

Normandy is a beautiful province in the north-west of France, a land of woods and streams and green pastures. On the night of Thérèse's birth the whole countryside

was covered with snow. It seemed to be an image of her soul, which was never to lose the whiteness of its baptismal innocence.

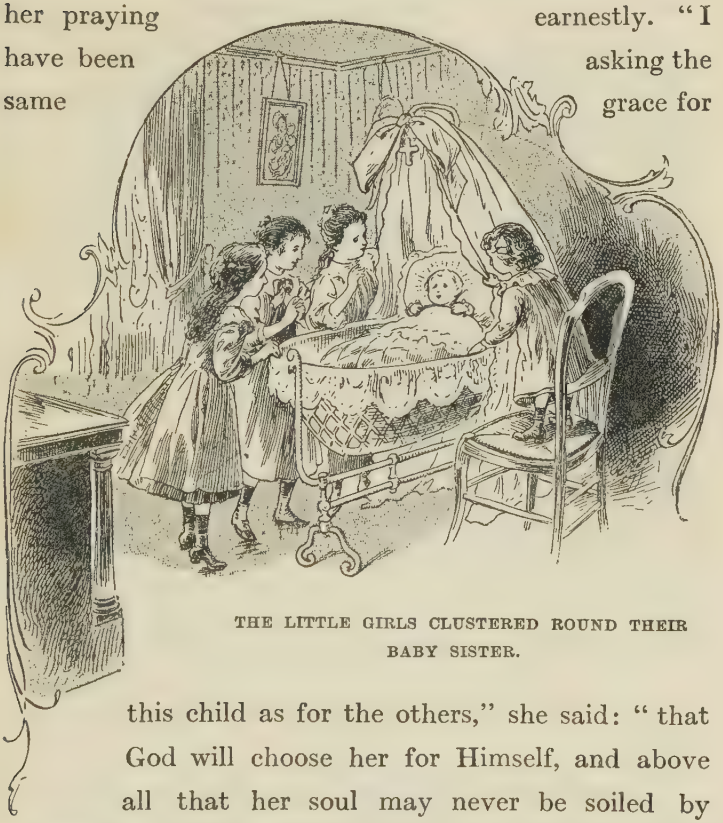
The parents of Thérèse, Monsieur and Madame Martin, were fervent Catholics, and they welcomed this ninth child as a precious gift from God. There were already four girls in the family, and four other little ones had died when they were babies.

THE HOUSE AT ALENÇON IN WHICH THÉRÈSE WAS BORN.

The children were all in bed and asleep when Thérèse was born, but their father himself went to wake up the two elder girls to tell them the joyful news. Marie, aged thirteen, sat up in bed, but Pauline, who was eleven, jumped out at once to run and see the baby. However, Monsieur Martin told them both to go to sleep again, promising that they should see her the first thing in the morning. He did not wake Léonie, who was nine, and still less Céline,

who was only three, as he feared they would be too excited.

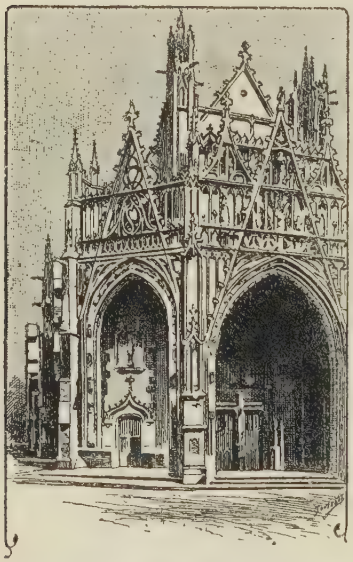
When he went back to Madame Martin, he found her praying earnestly. "I have been asking the same grace for



THE LITTLE GIRLS CLUSTERED ROUND THEIR BABY SISTER.

this child as for the others," she said: "that God will choose her for Himself, and above all that her soul may never be soiled by mortal sin. Rather than this, I begged He would take her from us at once, as He took the other children."

Very early next morning the four little girls were clustering round their baby sister. They spoke in whispers for fear of waking her, but Céline could not long keep quiet. She climbed on a chair, clapping her hands with little cries of joy, and finally gave the baby a resounding kiss, which, of course, woke her up. This was greeted with exclamations of delight from the others.



THE CHURCH OF NOTRE-DAME, WHERE THÉRÈSE WAS BAPTIZED.

"Oh, Mamma," said one, "how pretty she is! Her eyes are just like bits of sky."

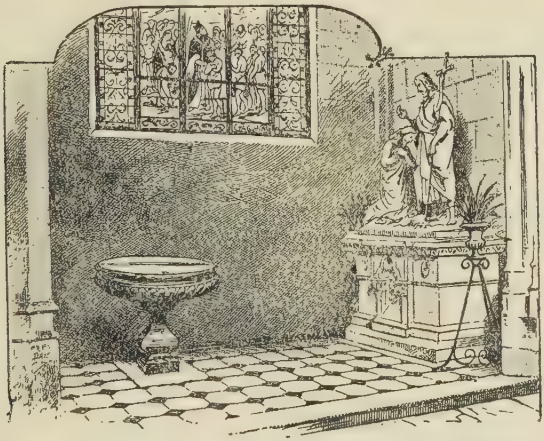
"Oh, she's smiling," said another; "do come and look, Mamma! She's smiling!"

And a third went into raptures over her tiny hands.

The parents of little Thérèse wished to have her baptized on the day of her birth, as all her brothers and sisters had been, but to their great regret they had to wait for the arrival of the godfather. Even one day

seemed a long delay to the pious mother as she watched her child with anxious eyes.

At last, on the morning of January 4, Thérèse was



THE BAPTISMAL FONT IN THE CHURCH OF NOTRE-DAME.

baptized in the Church of Notre-Dame. Her eldest sister, Marie, was her godmother, and she received the names of Marie Françoise Thérèse.

MARY AND JOSEPH FLEE INTO EGYPT TO SAVE THE HOLY CHILD FROM THE CRUELTY OF HEROD.

CHAPTER TWO

WITH "LITTLE ROSE" AT SEMALLÉ

BUT joy was soon turned into sorrow. After a few weeks, Thérèse became so ill that it seemed as if God were going to ask for her back again. No efforts were spared to restore her to health, but human remedies were useless, and even the fervent prayers of her heart-

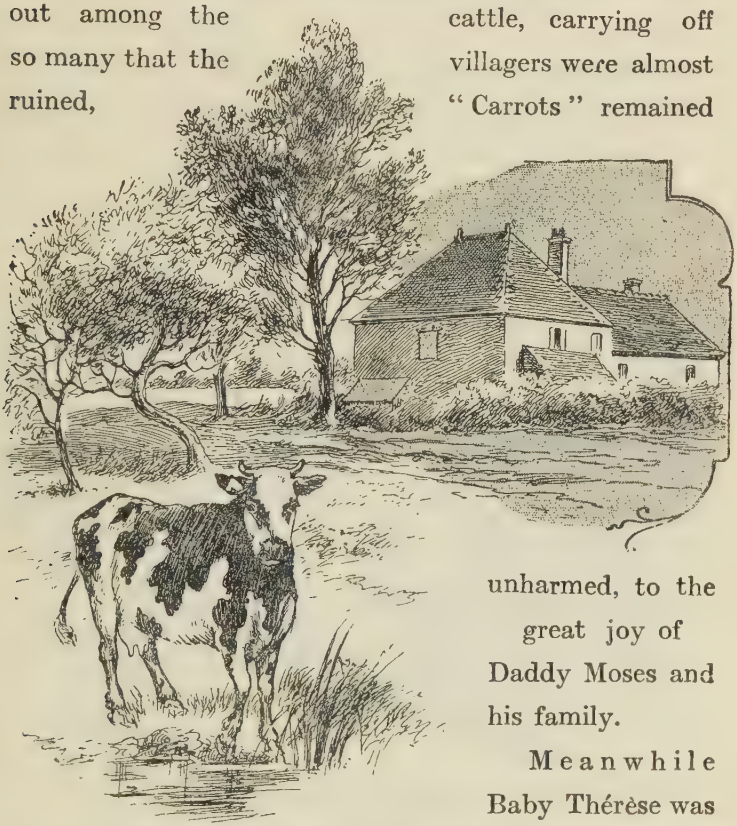
broken mother were for a long time unavailing. The doctor had given up all hope of saving her life, when suddenly, as if by a miracle, Thérèse began to grow better, and was soon well enough to be taken into the country, to the little village of Semallé, a few miles from Alençon.

The worthy peasant family to whose care she was confided consisted of the father, "Daddy Moses," the mother, and four children. The mother's name was Rose, but she was generally called "Little Rose," because she was so small.

The baby rapidly grew strong in the bracing country air. She spent the whole day out of doors. When her foster-mother was going to work in the fields, she would take Thérèse with her, snugly tucked into a wheelbarrow filled with hay. If it was time to milk the cow, she would set off with Thérèse in her apron, and then, as she needed both hands to work, she would tie her charge securely on the cow's back!

This cow was a splendid animal, white with reddish markings, and therefore called "Carrots." One of these marks was on the tip of her right ear, and made her look quite saucy, especially when she held her head erect, as she did when Thérèse went for a ride on her back.

These rides would seem to have brought good luck to the cow, for later, when a disease broke out among the cattle, carrying off so many that the villagers were almost ruined, "Carrots" remained unharmed, to the great joy of Daddy Moses and his family.



'LITTLE ROSE'S" FARM. THE COW WAS CALLED "CARROTS."

Meanwhile Baby Thérèse was growing more and more attractive. She was always laughing, and her little face was framed in the prettiest golden curls. All the village

children loved her, and they used often to dance round her in a ring, singing rhymes and kissing her in turns.

There was one boy of eleven who did not content himself with looking at her: he used to take her in his

THEY USED OFTEN TO DANCE ROUND HER IN A RING.

arms and lift her up to receive the homage of her little courtiers. That boy is now a priest.

Once when the children were playing in this way, the old curé of the village came up. He gazed long and

earnestly at Thérèse, and gave her his blessing, praying that she might one day be like her glorious patroness, the great St. Teresa.

Then he began to speak to the children about the family of little Thérèse, about her parents, and her grandfather Martin, an officer in the French army, who had been decorated by Charles X. for distinguished services to his country.

He went on to tell them stories of Madame Martin's family, the Guérins, who had helped and sheltered priests during the persecution which followed the Revolution in France. The grandfather of Thérèse was then only a child of three or four, but he had taken part in the troubles of those sad times. On one occasion the little fellow was actually sitting on a trough in which his uncle, a priest, was hiding from the Revolutionary soldiers; but he spread out his toys so solemnly, and seemed so engrossed in them, that the searchers did not even think it worth while to make him get down. He used also to accompany his uncle when the latter went round the countryside visiting the people, and the child's presence disarmed all suspicion as to the identity of the good priest, who was disguised as a peasant.

But to return to our story.

Monsieur and Madame Martin often went out to

Semallé to see their baby daughter. The elder girls, who were at school at the Visitation Convent of Le Mans, where their aunt was a nun, were not so fortunate. They were all the more delighted, therefore, when during the holidays they could make a visit to "little Rose's" cottage, the object of their walks.

There were still greater rejoicings when, on March 11, 1874, Thérèse came home. She was then fourteen months old, and was beginning to toddle alone, and to prattle incessantly in baby language. The whole household welcomed the child, who was to gladden their lives by the charm of her sunny temper and her affectionate heart.

ANGELS GATHER ROUND THE HOLY CHILD.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD OF THÉRÈSE— HER FIRST VICTORY

LITTLE Thérèse, having been so long in the country, took some time getting used to the town. She would scream loudly when fashionably dressed ladies came near her, and if they wanted to take her in their arms they had first to remove the offending

hat, because she had a special dislike to hats. She kept her smiles for people dressed like her peasant friends.

But she soon became at home, and all her love centred in her mother. She followed her about everywhere, in the house and in the garden, and never liked to be parted from her. She would not even go upstairs alone without stopping on each step and calling, "Mamma"; and if her mother did not answer immediately "Yes, darling," she would refuse to move.

Once, when her mother was telling her how God rewards good children, and how, in spite of His kindness, He is obliged to punish the naughty ones, Thérèse answered:

"I know what I should do if I had been naughty! I would hide myself in your arms, and you would hold me so tight that God would not be able to take me from you."

She seemed so convinced that she would be safe from punishment if she took refuge with her mother that Madame Martin's thoughts turned to Our Blessed Lady, and she resolved to inspire the child with a great love and trust for her Heavenly Mother.

Thérèse had such an affectionate nature that she could not bear to think she had caused her parents the

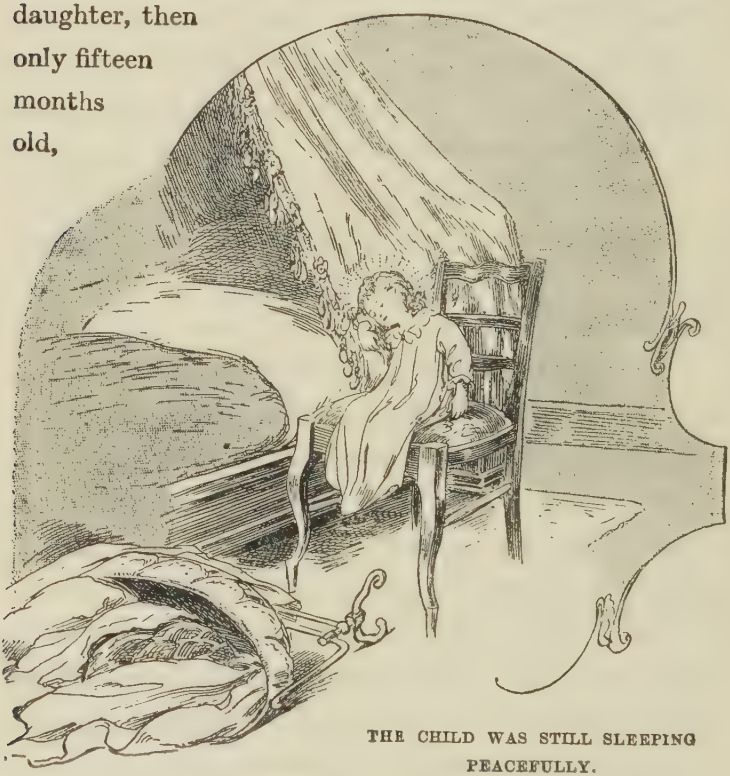
least pain, nor would she be parted, even for a short time, from those she loved. Marie used to give Céline lessons, but she would not let Thérèse stay in the room, fearing this would distract her pupil. The little one, however, begged so hard to be with Céline, and promised so earnestly to be good, that at last she was allowed to come. Marie gave her beads to thread and some pieces of stuff to sew, and she sat on a little stool as quiet as a mouse. If her needle came unthreaded, she did not say a word, but big tears would fall silently until Marie came to the rescue and made her happy by rethreading the needle!

She did not enjoy any treat which she could not share with Céline. Once, when she was only two or three, she went to see her aunt, a Visitation nun, who gave her a pretty basket full of sweets decorated with two sugar rings. Thérèse immediately decided that one of these rings must be for Céline, and was full of delight at the thought of giving it to her when she got home. But alas! on the way, she upset all the sweets, and the precious rings were lost! Bitter lamentations followed because she had, after all, no present for her sister.

While Thérèse was away in the country, Madame Martin constantly recommended her to the protection of

her Guardian Angel. He gave a proof of his watchful care after his little charge had returned home.

One morning Madame Martin had gone out, according to her custom, to hear an early Mass, leaving her baby daughter, then only fifteen months old,



THE CHILD WAS STILL SLEEPING PEACEFULLY.

fast asleep in her cot. What was her astonishment on her return to find the child on a chair beside the bed, still sleeping peacefully, while the cradle lay overturned

on the floor! It was humanly speaking impossible to explain either how she had escaped being hurt by the fall, or who had put her on the chair. The only solution seemed to be that her Guardian Angel had taken care of her. But though our good Angel accom-

HER GOOD ANGEL WROTE IT DOWN IN HIS BIG GOLDEN BOOK.

panies us everywhere, there is often a wicked spirit who hovers round us trying to make us do wrong.

One of his first attacks on little Thérèse was by tempting her to vanity when she was barely three years old.

She and her sisters had been invited by a friend to

spend the day in the country. Madame Martin told Marie to dress Thérèse, and to put on her best frock, which had short sleeves. But on second thoughts she said:

"No, put on another frock; it is too cold for her to have bare arms."

Thérèse at once felt the prick of temptation. She wanted very much to wear the best frock, for she said to herself:

"I should look ever so much prettier with bare arms."

But while the bad Angel was whispering thoughts of vanity, her good Angel was speaking gently to her heart, and his voice prevailed. Thérèse let herself be dressed without saying a word.

She had won her first victory, and her good Angel wrote it down joyfully in his big golden book.

THE HOLY CHILD OFFERS HIMSELF TO GOD TO ACCOMPLISH HIS DIVINE WILL.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PIETY OF THÉRÈSE

OUR Lord is always ready to give us the grace necessary to overcome temptation, but He wants us to ask Him for it, and He has promised that we shall obtain all we need if only we pray earnestly.

Thérèse loved to say her prayers. When she was still

quite a baby her mother had no trouble in making her join her little hands and offer her heart to God as soon as she awoke. She often asked to be taken to church, and would beg so hard that they were obliged to grant her request. She would not go to sleep without having once more asked God's blessing in a prayer which her mother had taught her.

One evening, however, she fell asleep without saying it, but, waking in the middle of the night, she at once called to her mother:

"Mamma, Mamma! I haven't said my prayer! I want to say my prayer."

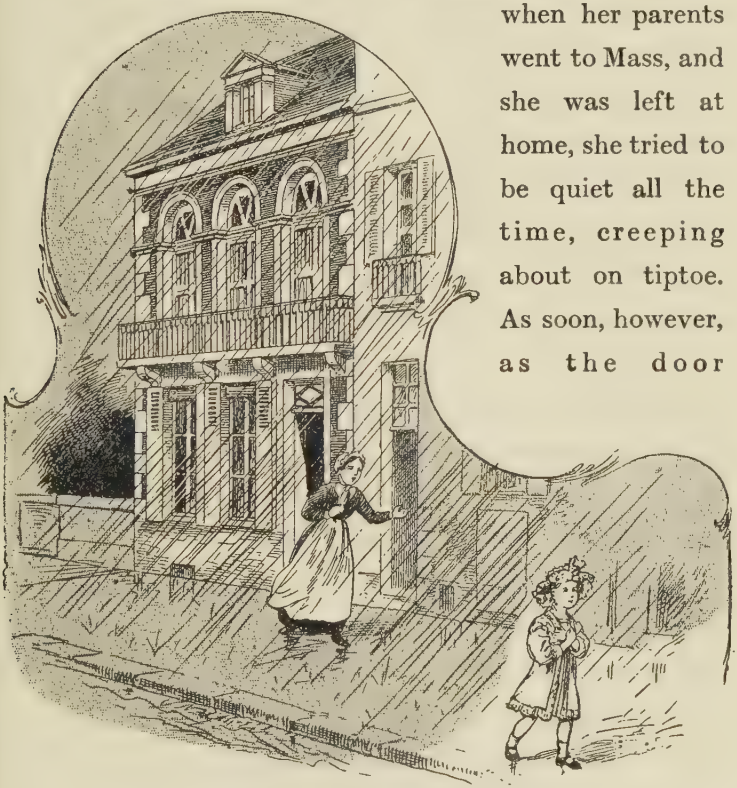
"Go to sleep, darling," said her mother; "you shall say it to-morrow."

But to-morrow would be to-morrow's prayer, and Thérèse must say *to-day's* prayer. She went on imploring so piteously that her mother gave in, fearing that otherwise she would not go to sleep again.

One feast-day it happened that the nurse did not take her to church during the afternoon walk. The child did not notice this until she reached home again, but then she burst into tears, saying that she wanted "*to go to Mass.*" She escaped from the nurse, opened the front door, and ran out in the pouring rain towards the church. The nurse hurried after her and brought her back, but

the poor baby cried for a whole hour, and could not be consoled.

She realized so vividly the meaning of prayer that when her parents went to Mass, and she was left at home, she tried to be quiet all the time, creeping about on tiptoe. As soon, however, as the door



SHE RAN OUT IN THE POURING RAIN.

opened on their return, there was a tremendous outburst of joy. She would rush towards Céline, exclaiming:

"Quick, Céline, give me the blessed bread!"

One day Céline did not bring any back. Thérèse could not do without it, for she looked upon this little feast as "her Mass." What was to be done? A bright idea struck her.

"You haven't got any blessed bread, Céline? Well, then, make some!"

Céline did not need to be told twice. Taking a piece of bread out of the cupboard, she solemnly recited a Hail Mary over it, and presented it to her little sister, who found it tasted just the same as blessed bread!

The heart of Thérèse turned to God as instinctively as a flower to the sun.

While still a tiny child, she used to recite a certain piece of poetry with such expression that she was always being made to say it. Her smile was almost angelic when with uplifted eyes and her little hand raised, she repeated the last line:

> "Dear little child with golden hair,
> Where do you think is the God of love?
> All over the world and everywhere,
> *And waiting for us in His Heaven above.*"

Heaven was indeed the place to which all her thoughts tended. God gave her a special grace to realize that all

imaginable happiness and joy are there, and that there only shall we be fully satisfied.

This accounts for a remark which certainly sounded strange in the mouth of such an affectionate child:

"Oh, Mamma darling!" she once exclaimed, "I *do* wish you would die!"

At this startling declaration everyone was horrified, but poor little Thérèse could not understand why she should be scolded. Her eyes filled with tears as she answered:

"It is because I want you to go to Heaven, and you said we must die to get there."

She loved her father and mother so much that she felt she could wish them nothing better than this. Her father did not mind this strange way of being loved. He was particularly fond of his youngest child, and when Madame Martin used laughingly to reprove him for spoiling her, he would answer:

"Well, why not? She is the Queen!"

The notice which everyone paid her might easily have made Thérèse wilful and exacting, even vain. But if she was occasionally naughty, far from excusing herself, she immediately acknowledged her fault and said she was sorry.

One day, for instance, she was on the swing, when her

father called her to come and give him a kiss. She ought to have got off directly, but she would not stir, and answered pertly:

"Come and get it yourself, Papa!"

Her father paid no attention to her, but Marie's displeasure showed her she had been naughty. She was sorry at once, and with repentant sobs ran after her father and flung her arms round his neck, begging to be forgiven.

Another time she behaved in very much the same way to her mother.

One morning, before going downstairs, Madame Martin went to kiss her, but Thérèse, who had waked up cross, was pretending to be asleep, and immediately buried her head under the bedclothes.

"I don't want anyone to look at me," she said peevishly.

Her mother told her she was not pleased, and went away.

A few minutes later, whom should she see at her side but Thérèse! The child had managed to climb out of her cot, and stumbling over her long nightdress, had come downstairs barefooted. Her face was wet with tears.

"Mamma," she sobbed, holding out her arms to her

mother, "please forgive naughty Thérèse! I *will* be good, because I want to be with the little angels in Heaven."

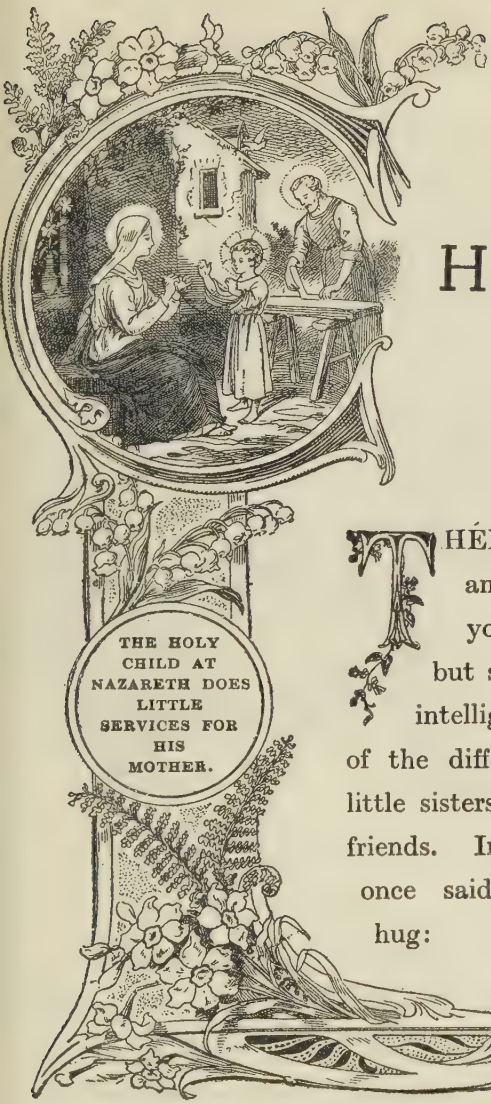
And her mother, knowing that she was really sorry, took her on her knee and comforted her.

Once Thérèse accidentally tore off a small piece of wall-paper. She was much distressed, because she knew how particular her father was about the order of the house. He happened just then to be out. Another child might have been glad to escape notice, and on being questioned might perhaps even have told an untruth. But Thérèse was too straightforward for this. When her father came home four hours later, and everyone else had forgotten the little mishap, she at once whispered to Marie:

HER FACE WAS WET WITH TEARS.

"Tell Papa that I tore the paper."

And then she stood like a criminal awaiting condemnation, till her father told her he was not angry with her.



THE HOLY CHILD AT NAZARETH DOES LITTLE SERVICES FOR HIS MOTHER.

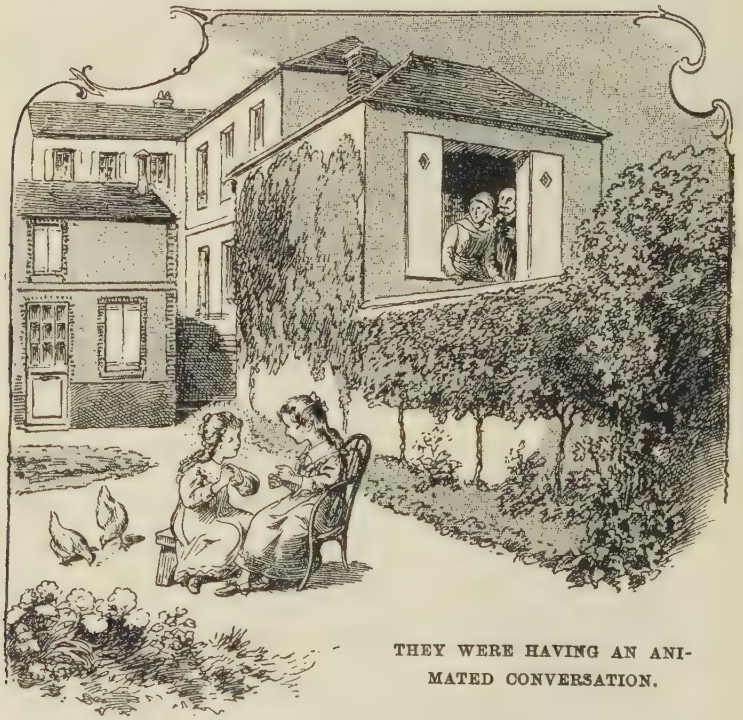
CHAPTER FIVE

"ACTS"

THÉRÈSE was three and a half years younger than Céline, but she was remarkably intelligent, and in spite of the difference of age, the little sisters soon became close friends. Indeed, as Thérèse once said, giving Céline a hug:

"We are like our little white chicks, we can't be separated."

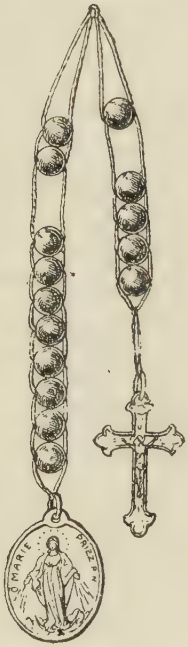
She was thinking of two pet bantams, given them by the nurse, which were never seen apart.



THEY WERE HAVING AN ANIMATED CONVERSATION.

Their mother used to say that she had never known two children so devoted to each other. They often had really spiritual talks together, in which Thérèse always took the lead. One day Céline, who was then six and a half, put the following question:

"How can God be in such a tiny Host?" Thérèse, a baby of three, promptly answered: "That's not at all wonderful, because He is Almighty." "And what does Almighty mean?" continued Céline. "It means," replied Thérèse, "that He can do whatever He likes." Her mother and sisters were astonished at these ready answers, especially as they had no recollection of ever having taught them to her.



THE "ACTS" ROSARY.

Another time the two children were sitting together in the garden having an animated conversation in which the word "acts" constantly recurred. This word puzzled an old lady who lived next door, and who happened to be sitting at her window.

"Acts, acts!" she repeated; "what do they mean?"

Tired at last of listening, she hurried downstairs to ask Louise, their nurse, what they meant by "acts."

I do not know what Louise told her, or if she knew any more about it than old Madame Battoir herself.

But you, children, shall hear the meaning of this mysterious word.

To please Our Lord it is not enough to overcome temptation. We must learn to make little sacrifices even in those things which are allowed us. In this way we strengthen our will to refuse ourselves the things which are forbidden. This is called making *acts* of virtue. For example, if a boy does not answer back when he is corrected; if he obeys promptly when he has been told to do something; if he shares with his friends, or with the poor, any little presents he has been given; if he speaks kindly to those in trouble; if he tries not to look about in church; if he gives in to brothers, sisters, and playfellows, instead of always wanting to be first, that boy is making " acts " of virtue.

This is what Céline and Thérèse were discussing so earnestly. They wanted to make many " acts," and offer them to the Holy Child. To increase the number and to be able to keep count, they had a special rosary, with beads which could be moved up and down. Each little sacrifice was marked by pulling a bead along the string. Thérèse delighted in this, and was continually to be seen putting her hand in her pocket to count a fresh " act."

THE CHILD JESUS WHO KNOWS ALL THINGS DEIGNS TO LEARN TO READ.

CHAPTER SIX

WHAT WE SOW WE SHALL REAP

OUR Lord rewarded Thérèse for her sacrifices by giving her great self-control. One Sunday she had been for a walk in the fields, and had gathered an armful of daisies, poppies, cornflowers, and ears of golden corn. She came home flushed with pleasure, and was just begin-

ning to arrange her flowers, when her grandmother asked for them for her altar. Thérèse gave them all up one by one. She was ready to cry, though only Céline, who knew her so well, saw this, for Thérèse did not show how much she minded. But when Céline questioned her afterwards, she owned what a big "act" she had had to make to let all her flowers be taken from her.

One might almost say that from the dawn of reason Thérèse had acquired this habit of giving in without grumbling or asking for anything back. Her natural character would have been a very difficult one had she not overcome herself early. She was so lively and restless that it was hard for her to apply her mind to anything, or to stay still for two minutes together, and all her mother's energy was needed to teach her the alphabet. When lesson-time drew near, she used to hide, but after a while she was sorry for this, and allowed herself to be kept a prisoner on her mother's knee, while she tried to understand and to repeat the name of the letter pointed out to her in the big book. Her sisters loved to listen to her, and her father would smile over his newspaper, showing plainly that he too was listening to the answers of his little Queen, and was interested in her progress.

Besides being impetuous, Thérèse was naturally

inclined to be very obstinate, as the following incident will show.

One day her mother said to her:

SHE ALLOWED HERSELF TO BE KEPT A PRISONER ON HER MOTHER'S KNEE.

"Thérèse darling, if you will kiss the ground I will give you a halfpenny."

In those days a halfpenny was a fortune to her, but, holding herself erect, she promptly answered:

"No, thank you, Mamma; I would rather go without the halfpenny!"

Sooner than make this little act of humility she preferred to lose the promised reward.

With such a character, the child might have grown up proud and selfish. She herself tells us that had she not been brought up carefully she might have become very wicked, and perhaps have lost her soul. But she had so true a sense of right and wrong that it was enough to tell her once: "That is not right, it hurts Our Lord," and she never wanted to do it again.

About this time, Thérèse had a dream which showed her that a good child is an object of terror to the demons, who fly from it angry and humbled.

One night she dreamt that she was walking alone in the garden, when, all at once, she saw near the arbour two ugly little devils dancing on a barrel of lime, in spite of the heavy irons attached to their feet. At first they glared at her with flaming eyes; then, as if seized with sudden terror, they jumped quick as lightning into the barrel, came out somehow at the other end, and hid themselves in the laundry, which opened into the garden. Finding them so cowardly, Thérèse overcame her fear and went to the window to see what they were going to do. The wretched little demons were running about

on the tables, not knowing how to escape her gaze. Now and then they timidly approached the window, but finding her still there they scampered off, looking the picture of misery.

A deep truth lies hidden in this dream. The devils are mere cowards who can do nothing to a soul in a state of grace, for they have not even the courage to meet the eyes of a little child.

THEY SCAMPERED OFF LOOKING THE PICTURE OF MISERY.

Perhaps you think that Thérèse was too pious to care for fun? On the contrary, she was always bright and happy. She loved the country, the tall trees, the flowers, and the little birds in their nests. She was a splendid runner for her age, and enjoyed nothing so much as swinging. It used to terrify her mother to see her go so high, but Thérèse herself was absolutely fearless, and shouted with delight.

As soon as her father came home in the evening she would rush to meet him, and seat herself on his foot. He would carry her about in this fashion through house and garden. Then, lifting her high in the air, he would put her on his shoulder and set her down at last with a big kiss.

THE CHILD JESUS FEEDS LITTLE BIRDS AND THINKS OF ORPHAN CHILDREN.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DEATH OF HER MOTHER

ALTHOUGH Thérèse was only four, she knew that Heaven is our true home, and that in this world we cannot have everything we want.

She knew what it means to be separated from those we love, for she sorely missed her sister Pauline, who was a

boarder at the Visitation Convent of Le Mans. Poor little Thérèse was often to be seen on the balcony outside her room, gazing wistfully towards the station. Once Marie, finding her there, said:

"What are you doing, Thérèse?"

"I am looking to see if Pauline is coming back," was the answer.

But this separation was only a shadow of that which was to come a few months later, when Our Lord took from the children their pious and devoted mother.

During the illness of Madame Martin, Thérèse and Céline were often sent to spend the day with a friend. Instead of this being a pleasant change, it only distressed and troubled them. They instinctively clung to each other, as if oppressed with the knowledge that something very sad was happening at home.

One morning as they were on their way to their friend's house, Céline suddenly remembered that they had not said their prayers. She whispered to her little sister:

"Must we tell that we haven't said our prayers?"

"Oh, yes!" came the unhesitating reply.

On their arrival, therefore, Céline timidly told the lady, who took them to a big room and left them alone. Then for the first time it flashed on poor Thérèse what

the loss of a mother means, and in a storm of grief she sobbed out:

"Oh, it's not like our mamma! She always *heard* us say our prayers!"

THÉRÈSE WAS PRESENT WHEN HER MOTHER RECEIVED EXTREME UNCTION.

Madame Martin died on August 28, 1877. Thérèse was present when her mother received Extreme Unction; she heard her father's stifled sobs, and when all was over was lifted up to kiss her mother's icy forehead. She saw, too, the empty coffin which had been

placed upright in the passage. These impressions were never effaced from her mind.

When the funeral was over, the five orphaned children returned to the desolate home. They were gazing at each other in awestruck silence when the nurse, turning pityingly to the two younger ones, exclaimed:

" Poor little things ! you have no mother now !"

At once Céline threw herself into Marie's arms, crying out:

" *You* shall be *my* mother !"

It might have been expected that Thérèse, who always followed her sister's example, would have imitated her in this, particularly as Marie was her godmother. But it occurred to her that Pauline might be hurt at not having a little girl too, so she looked at her lovingly and exclaimed in her turn:

" And Pauline will be *my* mother."

Monsieur Martin bore his great loss with perfect resignation, forgetting his own sorrow that he might devote himself to his little motherless daughters.

Being uncertain what to do for the best, he consulted his friends. Some advised him to remain in Alençon; others suggested that he should send his children to a boarding-school; others, again, urged him to take them

to live near their mother's family. The thought of leaving a place so full of tender memories as Alençon was very painful to him. His business was there, and he had many devoted friends. Moreover, outside the town, he had built himself a charming little country-house, where for many years he had spent happy holidays with his children.

He did not, however, hesitate long. His brother-in-law, Monsieur Guérin, lived in Lisieux, and he decided to settle in the same town.

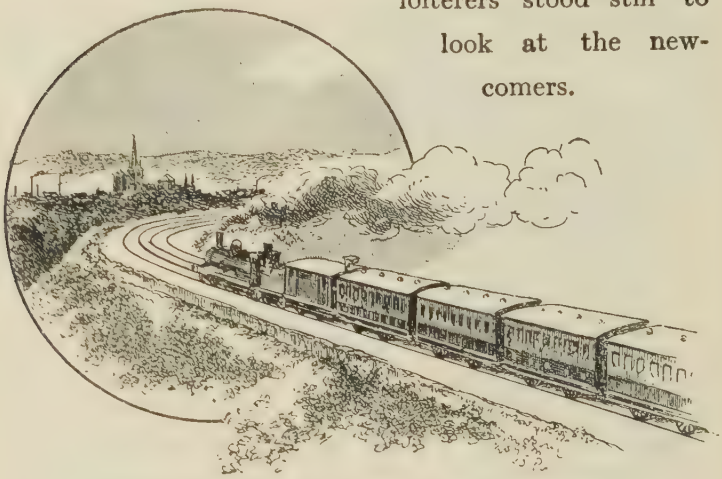
THE HOLY FAMILY RETURN FROM EGYPT TO THEIR NATIVE LAND.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ARRIVAL AT LISIEUX

ONE autumn evening in the year 1877, a train from Alençon drew up at the station of Lisieux. A cab was soon seen jolting over the ill-paved streets, passing by the old Norman houses, the picturesque mediæval appearance of which gives the town a poetic touch in striking

contrast to the black smoke rising from the tall factory chimneys. The cab stopped at the Place St. Pierre, near the ancient Cathedral of the same name. A few inquisitive heads appeared at the windows, and some loiterers stood still to look at the newcomers.



ONE AUTUMN EVENING A TRAIN FROM ALENÇON.

The first to alight was a man about fifty.

A little girl jumped out after him, and put her hand confidingly in his. A tall brown-haired girl came next, followed by another, small and frail, and two younger children. They formed a charming group, but the sadness visible on all the young faces, together with their deep mourning, made the passers-by look at them sympathetically and say to one another:

"Poor children! they have probably just lost their mother."

The door of the house before which this interesting family had alighted now opened, and two little girls

THE CAB STOPPED AT THE PLACE ST. PIERRE.

rushed out, followed more sedately by their parents. For a few moments nothing was to be heard but delighted

exclamations from the children, and the more sober greetings of their elders.

You will easily have recognized the family I have described. The tall white-haired gentleman is Monsieur Martin, the father of Thérèse. But perhaps you would like to have a few more details about his children.

Marie, the eldest, was then in her eighteenth year. Hers was a sunny and affectionate nature. She was tenderly devoted to her sisters, who loved her dearly in return. Her father called her his "Diamond," because she was always sparkling with fun and originality.

Pauline, aged sixteen, had just left school. She was shy and gentle, and her father's name for her was "Precious Pearl." But beneath her sweetness and her retiring ways was hidden remarkable force of will and a judgment unusually well balanced. Marie, who since her mother's death had become mistress of the house, although herself possessing rare gifts of mind and heart, often had recourse to Pauline's advice in domestic affairs.

After Pauline came Léonie, aged thirteen. She too was gentle and retiring, her loving nature prompting her to constant unselfishness and self-effacement.

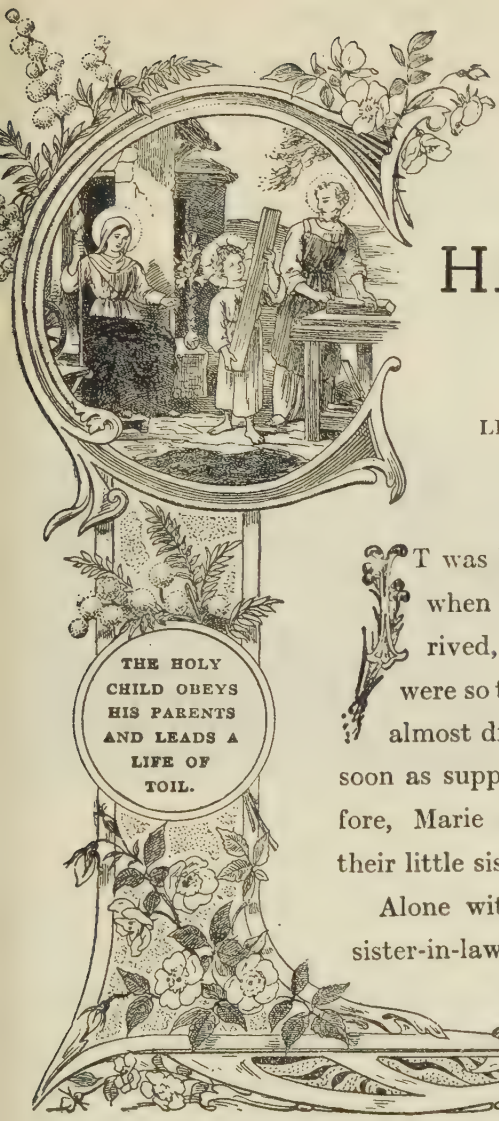
Céline was just eight, and somewhat shy, though her

eyes danced with mischief, and she was full of life and spirits.

Thérèse, the little fair-haired Queen, was five. She won all hearts by her charming ways and her bright smile.

The four that came out to welcome the new-comers were Monsieur Guérin, brother-in-law of Monsieur Martin, his wife, and their two little daughters. Jeanne, the elder, a very intelligent child, was about the same age as Céline. Dark-eyed Marie, two years older than Thérèse, was a great rogue, and something of a tomboy.

This was the family which was henceforward to play so large a part in the life of Thérèse.



THE HOLY CHILD OBEYS HIS PARENTS AND LEADS A LIFE OF TOIL.

CHAPTER NINE

LES BUISSONNETS

IT was late in the evening when the travellers arrived, and the children were so tired that they were almost dropping asleep. As soon as supper was over, therefore, Marie and Pauline took their little sisters up to bed.

Alone with his brother and sister-in-law, Monsieur Martin

began to discuss with them his plans for the future. The fortune which he had made in business at Alençon was sufficient to allow him to live henceforward on his income, and to devote himself entirely to the education of his children. He relied on the kindness and affection of Madame Guérin to guide his elder girls

LES BUISSONNETS.

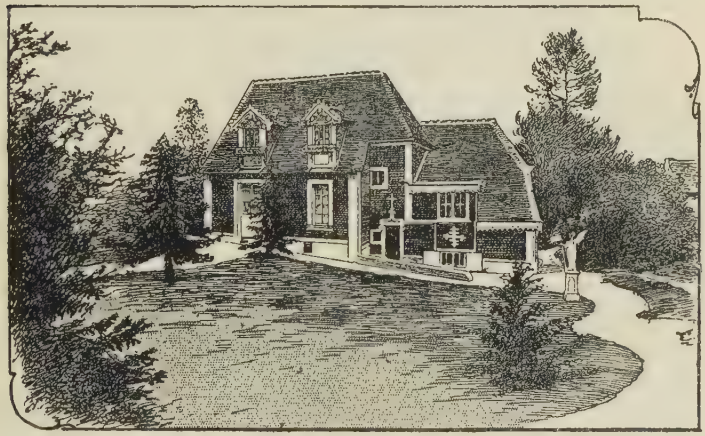
in their duties as "little mothers" and mistresses of the new home in Lisieux.

Early the next day our party set out for "Les Buissonnets." After crossing the public park, they were soon in the narrow lane leading to the house where Thérèse was to pass her happy sheltered childhood. The elder

girls looked sadly at the home where they would never see their dearly-loved mother.

But Thérèse was delighted with everything.

The house itself was bright and sunny, and to add to its charms there was a large belvedere with carved woodwork and stained glass windows, commanding on all



LES BUISSONNETS FROM THE BACK GARDEN.

sides a beautiful view over hills and meadows. In front of the house was a flower-garden with lawns and trees, and behind, a big kitchen-garden. It all seemed wonderful to the imagination of a child of five.

They soon settled down in this their new home. Marie spared no pains to make her father happy, while Pauline busied herself with the little ones confided to

her care. This was a charge that seemed to have been left to her by her mother, who on her death-bed had taken Pauline's hand and kissed it reverently, as if to appoint her spiritual mother of her sisters.

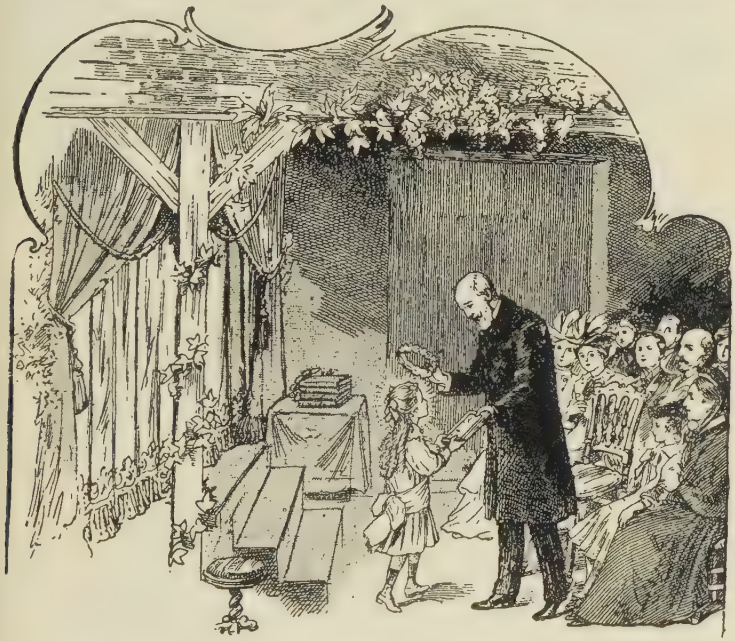
Pauline took upon herself the entire care and education of Thérèse, who was still too young to go to school. Under so devoted a teacher, the child soon learned to read and write, and the first word she could read was "Heaven."

Every day, when lessons were over, the "little Queen" went up to the belvedere, the usual quarters of her father, whom she called her "King." She would climb on to his knee and proudly show him her marks, which were always good.

Sometimes she would find him in the garden, and take him for a walk, skipping along gaily at his side. If she left him for a moment, it was only to make up strange drinks from the bark of trees. When these "wines" turned out a pretty colour she would bring them to her father in a doll's cup. He would pretend to drink the odd mixture, and declare it delicious.

Another favourite occupation of Thérèse was to make altars of moss in a hollow of the garden wall. When they were ready, her father had to come and look at them and go into raptures over their beauty.

To encourage her to work diligently at her lessons a great celebration was held every year at "Les Buissonnets" for the distribution of prizes. Though Thérèse was the only competitor, strict justice was observed,



HER FATHER SOLEMNLY PRESENTED HER WITH HER PRIZES.

and she only obtained the rewards she had really deserved. A number of friends were invited to see a play acted by the children, the conservatory being hung with draperies for the occasion.

But before the play began, the "little Queen" made

her entry on the stage, and her father, seated in the place of honour, solemnly presented her with her prizes.

This ceremony always suggested to the childish imagination of Thérèse the day of judgment, when only the wicked need have any fear, while those who all their lives have worked for God will be generously rewarded.

THE HOLY CHILD WITH HIS FOSTER FATHER ST. JOSEPH.

CHAPTER TEN

WALKS WITH HER FATHER—THÉRÈSE ASKS QUESTIONS

NEARLY every afternoon Thérèse went out for a walk with her father. They always had a companion on these occasions, a beautiful white spaniel with a long silky coat. During the walk they never missed making a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in one or

other of the churches in the town. It was easy for the townsfolk to know to which church they had gone

THE DEVOTED "TOM" STOOD SENTINEL AT THE DOOR.

for the devoted "Tom" always stood sentinel at the door. He knew quite well that church is not meant for dogs, and so while his master and little mistress

were saying their prayers, he would wait on the steps as good as gold.

If the visit seemed long, he went off to have a game with friends close by, but he soon returned to his post, and when they came out, he bounded round them barking with delight.

THE CARMELITE CHAPEL AT THE TIME OF SAINT THÉRÈSE.

What did Thérèse say to Our Lord when she went to see Him? Just what came naturally from her heart:

"Dear Lord, I love You! I want to love You for those who don't love You; I want to be always faithful to You, and to make up to You for all the children who never think of You."

While they were out, Thérèse would ask her father questions about the things she saw, or anything that came into her head.

"Papa," she said one day, "what do you say to God

when you go to see Him ? and to whom did you take off your hat just now ? I didn't see anyone."

Her father told her all he said to Jesus in the Tabernacle. He explained to her that he always took off his hat when passing a Church, out of respect for the Blessed Sacrament, also before a Calvary, to honour the Passion, and whenever he met priests, because of their sacred character.

Then Thérèse continued:

"Papa, why do you tell Marie to pay the shopmen quickly ?"

"Because, little Queen, we must not live at the expense of others; it is an injustice to make our neighbour work without giving him the payment which is his due. I will tell you a sad story which is true.

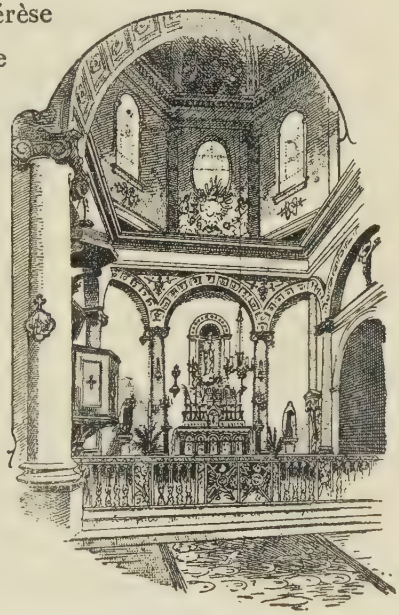
"A poor widow with four children, the youngest of them barely two, worked day and night as a milliner to make money to keep her family. The grand ladies for whom she worked paid her very badly, and there were even some who did not pay her at all. She would go back two or three times to the same house, and each time she was turned away. As she herself was honest, and always paid her own debts, a day came when there was nothing to eat in the house, and the children had to go supperless to bed. For several months this sad state

of things went on, until at last the poor mother died, worn out with the struggle, leaving four little orphans with no one to care for them."

During this story Thérèse hung her head, and the tears began to fall.

"Oh, Papa," she sobbed in great distress, "what shall we do, that this may never happen again?"

"Well, darling, we will think of what old Tobias said to his son: 'Remember that the workman deserves his pay; do not sleep even a single night without having paid him his hire.' I was struck by those words when I was quite a boy."



INTERIOR OF THE CARMELITE CHAPEL (ON THE RIGHT, THE GRILLE OF THE NUNS' CHOIR).

Then Thérèse, looking at her father, her eyes round with admiration, exclaimed: "Oh, Papa! if the great men of the Government only knew you, they would make you King, and France would never have been so

happy before! But I am glad they don't know you, because you would be unhappy, like all Kings."

This outburst of enthusiasm was followed by a silence, after which Thérèse went on:

"Papa, why do you go to six o'clock Mass every morning in winter, when you could easily go later?"

"Certainly I could, Thérèse, but I like that Mass, because all the poor people go to it. Besides—I tell you this as if you were a big girl—I go because it gives me the chance of doing a little penance. For penance makes up to God, not for our own sins only but for those of all sinners!"

Thérèse grew thoughtful.

She understood that by making "acts" you correct your faults and offer sacrifices to little Jesus, but how could these same acts help sinners by giving them back the purity of soul which they have lost?

Just at this moment they came to a bend of the road near a stream covered with water-lilies. Suddenly there was a loud splash.

"What's that?" cried Thérèse, and as she spoke Tom's head appeared in the midst of the lilies. Monsieur Martin laughed, and whistled to the dog, who came out dripping.

"What a state you're in, Tom!" said Thérèse.

"Now try and keep still, and don't shake yourself too near us!"

She had hardly said the words when Tom began rolling in the dusty road. In a moment he had lost all his beauty, and looked like a ball of mud.

"How dirty he is!" cried Thérèse.

"Yes," said her father, "Victoire will have to give him a fine scrubbing when he gets in! That is a picture, little Queen, of a soul which has soiled itself in the mud of sin, and which needs some charitable hand to wash it clean again!"

By this time they had reached home. Thérèse had walked a long way, and talked a great deal, and she was very thirsty.

"Oh, Pauline," she called out, as soon as she had set foot on the threshold, "you don't know how thirsty I am!"

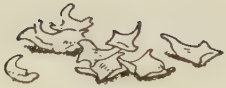
Pauline, knowing nothing of what Thérèse had just heard, replied:

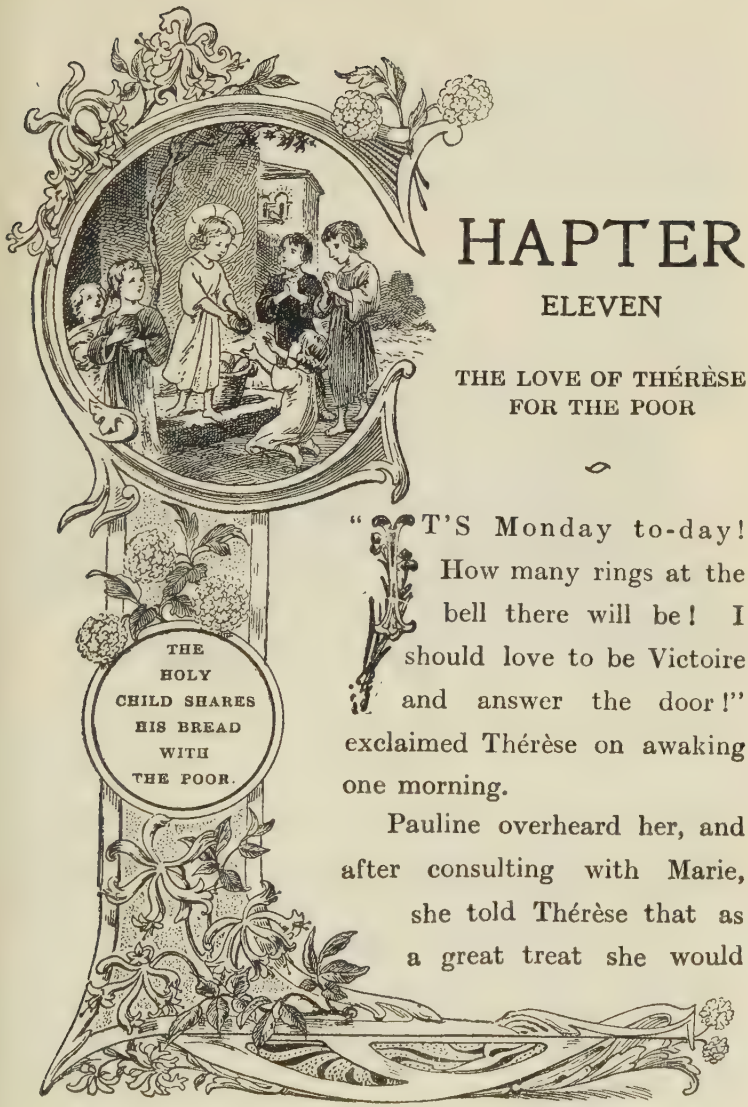
"Would you like to do without a drink to save a poor sinner?"

Now was the moment to practise what she had been told.

"Yes, Pauline," she answered at once, though a big sigh betrayed how much it cost her.

But Pauline thought her little girl had done enough by being so ready to make the "act," and after a few minutes brought her a cooling drink. Thérèse did not know if she ought to take it, for fear of not saving the sinner. But her "little mother" reassured her by saying that besides the merit of her "act," she would have still more merit now by being obedient, and that these two "merits" would perhaps save two sinners instead of one.





CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE LOVE OF THÉRÈSE FOR THE POOR

"IT'S Monday to-day! How many rings at the bell there will be! I should love to be Victoire and answer the door!" exclaimed Thérèse on awaking one morning.

Pauline overheard her, and after consulting with Marie, she told Thérèse that as a great treat she would

let her give away the food which was always distributed to the poor on Monday mornings. Thérèse clapped her hands with delight, and put on a solemn expression in keeping with this responsible duty.

At the first sound of the bell, she jumped up, ran

SHE HANDED THE BREAD TO THE EXPECTANT BEGGAR WITH A SMILE.

to the door, and, opening it gently, handed the bread to the expectant beggar with a smile. The whole morning a long procession of poor people came to the door. Thérèse had not a moment's rest; she was quite out of breath and flushed with excitement and pleasure. Once, however, she came back in great distress.

"Oh, Pauline!" she said, "there's a poor woman. She is so pale, and has a sick baby in her arms!"

The imploring eyes of the child seemed to beg for something more to give. Her unspoken request was at once granted. She ran off, but was soon back again.

"Pauline," she said with a quiver in her voice, "the beggar woman said to me, 'God bless you, little lady!'"

And overcome by such thanks, she could not keep back her tears.

Thérèse gave alms, not only on Monday, but often besides, for every afternoon, during the walk, other opportunities of charity occurred, and she would give her penny with a heart full of pity for those in need.

One day, seeing a poor old man dragging himself along on crutches, she ran to meet him. But he looked at her sadly and refused her offering. Thérèse came back to her father almost crying. She had wanted to help the poor man, and she was afraid she had hurt him. Her kind little heart could not bear the thought. What was to be done? Her father had just bought her a bun.

"Shall I take it to the poor man?" she said. "He won't have money, but perhaps he will take my bun!"

She wanted to run and give to him, but he had

gone too far. She began to cry, but suddenly this idea occurred to her:

"If *I* have not been able to help this poor man, *God* can. Pauline says that Our Lord grants everything we

SHE WANTED TO RUN AND GIVE IT TO HIM, BUT HE HAD GONE TOO FAR.

ask Him on our First Communion day, so I will pray for my poor old man then."

This thought consoled her, and four years later she kept her promise.

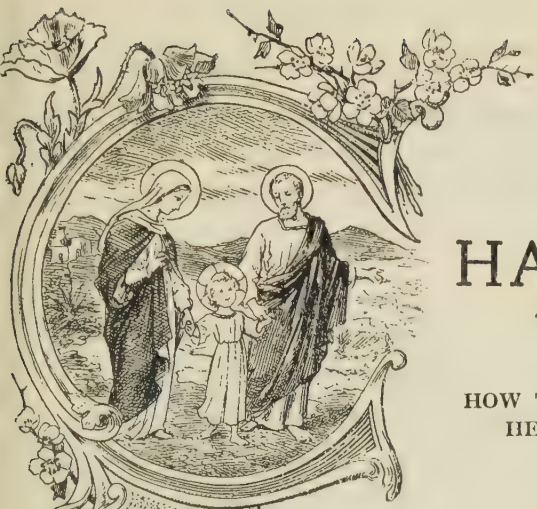
Who that old man was no one knows, but it would seem as though Our Lord was so touched by the kind thought of little Thérèse that after she had become a Carmelite and had gone to Heaven, He granted through her intercession a wonderful favour to another poor old man who was dying of cancer. He was in the Hospital of the Little Sisters of the Poor at Lisieux, and someone read to him this incident from the life of Thérèse. It struck him that a child who had been so kind to the suffering poor would surely have pity on him, and so he prayed to her to be cured. His simple faith was rewarded, for his tongue, already half consumed by the cancer, was not only suddenly healed without any human remedy, but grew again fresh and entire.

Thus does God show us the beauty of charity, by the power He has given little Thérèse in Heaven, as a reward for having practised it so well on earth. I should never end were I to tell you all she did, or wanted to do, for the poor. Her sisters had to restrain her eagerness, and later on she said:

"I could never keep anything. Had I been rich, and free to dispose of my wealth, I should have ruined myself, for I could not have seen anyone in poverty without giving him all he needed."

It was this tender compassion for all sufferers which

made her ask Our Lord that she might "spend her Heaven in doing good on earth." This He has generously granted, as we may see every day by the wonderful favours she obtains for those who put their trust in her.



JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH AT NAZARETH.

CHAPTER TWELVE

HOW THÉRÈSE SPENT HER HOLIDAYS

YOU know, children, that to become holy, God does not only ask us to make "acts" of mortification. He wants us to do our ordinary actions well. For instance, if you are having recreation or holidays you may enjoy yourselves thoroughly, but without forgetting that

you belong to God. More than this, you should make use of these amusements to raise your hearts to Him. If this seems difficult to understand, I will explain what I mean by showing you how Thérèse spent one of her holidays.

Thursday was always a great day with Thérèse. It was a holiday for her and for her confidante and playmate, Céline. Céline was now old enough to be at school at the Benedictine Convent, and though she came home every evening, it was almost bed-time when she had finished her home-work, and poor Thérèse saw very little of her. The two children, therefore, longed for Thursday, when they could be together.

One Thursday was to be a whole holiday, and they were told overnight that there was to be a picnic party.

It was barely seven o'clock when Pauline came to call her "little girls," but they were already wide awake, and jumped out of bed, bubbling over with joyous anticipation. They made their morning offering, dressed quickly, and then said their prayers. The sun was shining brilliantly, and everything promised a hot day.

As soon as breakfast was over, they slung their baskets over their shoulders and set off in the highest

spirits. Along the road they picked flowers under the hedgerows, and all at once they found a nest in the bushes. As Thérèse was too small to see, Pauline lifted her up, and she parted the hedge carefully, holding her breath so as not to frighten the baby birds.

SHE PARTED THE HEDGE CAREFULLY.

"Would you like to take them home?" asked her father. "They are starlings; you could put them in the aviary with the other birds."

Thérèse became thoughtful for a moment. She was very fond of pets. She had doves, paraquets, canaries,

bullfinches, and linnets in her aviary, and some goldfish in a glass bowl. These little starlings would get on so well with the other birds. But then it would never do to take them from their mother. Thérèse instinctively protected everything weak and helpless. She was afraid of hurting even an insect, and left the nest untouched.

They continued their walk, and as Thérèse looked at the woods and meadows, she seemed to hear them telling her of the goodness of God, and of His uncreated loveliness reflected in the beauty of creation.

"Only think," she exclaimed—"God has made all this out of nothing, just to make us happy! I *do* love Him!"

At last they found a splendid place both for lunch and fishing in a meadow by the side of a broad stream. The walk had sharpened their appetites, and they were not slow to unpack their hampers. But Thérèse did not forget to say her grace.

After a merry lunch they all wandered off in different directions to amuse themselves as they liked. Thérèse spent her time trotting to and fro between her sisters, gathering armfuls of flowers, or sitting beside her father trying to catch minnows with her own little rod.

Finally, she settled herself apart on a grassy bank, and gazed in silence at the landscape before her. Her

thoughts turned to her mother in Heaven, and she began to understand that this earth, in spite of its loveliness, is only a place of exile, a path leading to the land where everything is far sweeter and more beautiful, and where the happy days will last for ever.

She had felt like this once before when out

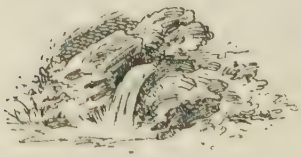
SHE BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS EARTH IS ONLY A PLACE OF EXILE.

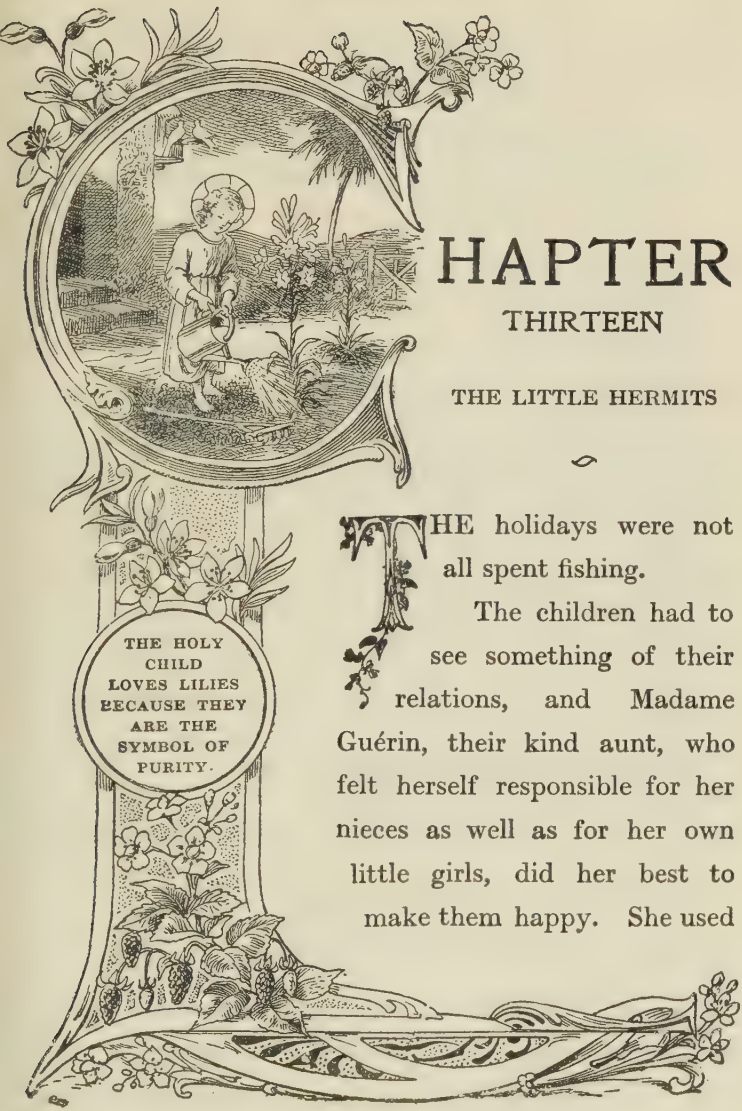
fishing with her father. In spite of her enjoyment there had been the same sense of disappointment. The jam sandwiches, prepared by Pauline, which had been so fresh and tempting in the morning, were stale and un-

inviting when lunch time came. This somehow made earth seem sadder, and Thérèse began to see that only in Heaven will there be perfect joy.

But the picnic seemed likely to end in disaster, for during the afternoon a storm had been gathering, and now suddenly burst. Monsieur Martin caught up his little daughter and carried her away from the trees, which he feared might attract the lightning. As he was crossing the meadow, a thunderbolt fell close to them. But Thérèse was not at all frightened, for she knew she was in God's hands as surely as she was in her father's arms.

The storm soon passed, and tired and happy they returned home through the fields, on which the raindrops were sparkling like diamonds in the sun.





CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE LITTLE HERMITS

THE holidays were not all spent fishing.

The children had to see something of their relations, and Madame Guérin, their kind aunt, who felt herself responsible for her nieces as well as for her own little girls, did her best to make them happy. She used

often to take them to a beautiful park, called the Jardin de l'Etoile, a favourite playground for children. Thérèse loved running about in the thickets picking flowers, and she always returned with a big bunch.

She and her favourite cousin, Marie, had invented an original game called "Hermits." They had heard from their parents stories of the Saints who went to live in the desert, and they were fired with the desire of imitating them. So they made themselves a cell in a quiet corner of the garden, and while one hermit knelt and prayed the other worked, pretending to plant and water the vegetables, of which their diet was supposed to consist. When he was tired of working, and his brother of praying, they changed places.

But one of the little anchorites was always inclined to prolong the time of prayer. This was Thérèse. She did not only pretend, she really did pray, and spent many happy moments talking to Our Lord and listening to His answers.

The two children kept silence like real monks, and when they had anything to say to each other, they expressed themselves by signs. They put on a very solemn expression, and walked about with downcast eyes. The make-believe continued even in the street.

They said the rosary as they went along, using their fingers to count on.

One day, on the way home from school, Thérèse thought she would imitate the recollection of the hermits.

"Lead me," she said to Marie; "I am going to shut my eyes."

Marie immediately wanted to copy her.

"So am I," came the answer.

They were on the pavement, where there was no danger of their being run over, and for a time all went well.

WHILE ONE HERMIT KNELT AND PRAYED, THE OTHER WORKED.

Suddenly a loud crash made Jeanne, who was walking in front with Céline, turn hastily round. To her amazement, she saw that the two children had fallen over and upset some boxes

standing at a shop door, and the angry shopkeeper was hurrying out to pick up his goods. Needless to say, the hermits opened their eyes wide enough to scramble to their feet and run away, not only from the shopman, but also from the well-deserved scolding which Jeanne had in store for them.

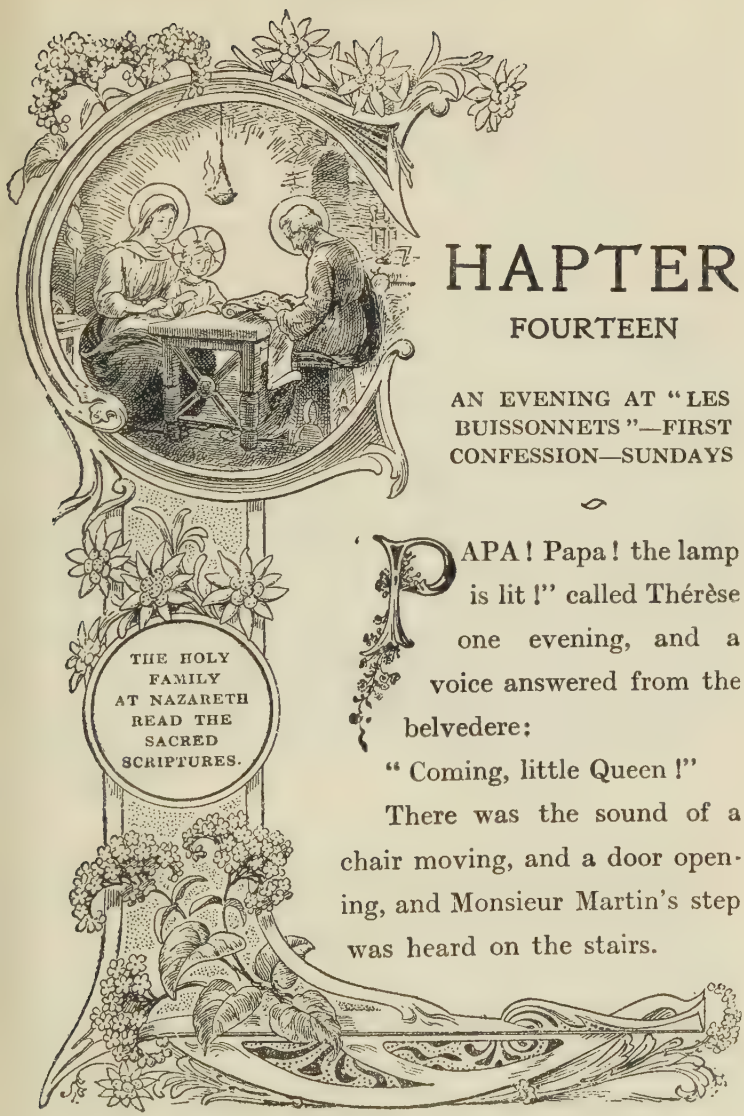
SHE PICTURED HER SOUL AS A TINY WHITE-SAILED BOAT.

In spite of her taste for the life of a solitary, Thérèse was overjoyed when one day her father proposed a visit to Trouville, by the sea. From that moment she lived in a dream of eager anticipation, but the reality far exceeded her most glowing expectations.

It was the first time she had ever seen the sea, and she sat gazing at it in silent wonder. She enjoyed

picking up the pretty coloured shells with which the beach was strewn, and at each fresh find she would give little shrieks of delight. The elder girls used to go for long walks, and Thérèse generally went with them on their expeditions. Their favourite walk was to the "Black Rocks." One day while her sisters were filling their fishing-baskets with shells, Thérèse sat there apart with Pauline.

It was evening, just when the sun seems to sink into the wide waters, leaving behind it a golden track of light, an image, Pauline said, of the path of faithful souls, lit up by grace. Thérèse pictured her own soul as a tiny white-sailed boat floating in the midst of that shining way, and she determined that Jesus should always be its pilot, to steer it swiftly and peacefully to the heavenly shore.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

AN EVENING AT "LES BUISSONNETS"—FIRST CONFESSION—SUNDAYS

"PAPA! Papa! the lamp is lit!" called Thérèse one evening, and a voice answered from the belvedere:

"Coming, little Queen!"

There was the sound of a chair moving, and a door opening, and Monsieur Martin's step was heard on the stairs.

It was getting near Christmas-time, and a bright fire was crackling merrily on the hearth. As soon as her father had taken his usual place beside it, Thérèse clambered on to his knee. Marie sat at the round table with a book, Pauline took her embroidery and Léonie her tapestry-frame, whilst Céline settled herself on a low chair to look at the pictures in a big album.

Then Marie began to read aloud Dom Gueranger's "Liturgical Year," a book which explains, season by season, all the beautiful mysteries of our Faith. This more serious reading was followed by some passages from another book of a lighter description, and then began an animated conversation. The talk naturally turned on Midnight Mass, and Thérèse asked:

"Papa, have you remembered the Yule log?"

When her father answered, "Yes," she continued eagerly:

"Is it very big?"

Monsieur Martin got up and went out. A moment later he came in almost staggering under the weight of a huge log.

"Now are you satisfied, little Queen?" he said, laying it at her feet.

"Oh yes, Papa!" cried Thérèse, clapping her hands

delightedly. "Our fire, at any rate, won't go out on Christmas night, and the Holy Child will find it burning beautifully when He comes! I'll put my shoes in the fireplace on this side, and Céline's on that! Oh, when will it be here? It's so long coming!"

THÉRÈSE CLAMBERED ON TO HER FATHER'S KNEE.

The others laughed at their little sister's childish glee, and her father looked at her lovingly. Because Thérèse was absolutely unspoilt, the smallest things gave her pleasure. How she enjoyed those winter evenings! With what delight she watched the red

apples roasting in the fire, and the chestnuts cooking in the embers! As they ate them, they sang old Breton ballads and Christmas carols, calling on the Christ Child to come, or thanking Him for His gracious coming. They were never at a loss for some fresh form of amusement, and these simple pleasures were among the sweetest joys of home life.

After a merry evening, they said night prayers together, and Thérèse, kneeling beside her father, had only to look at him to learn how the Saints pray. Then good-nights were said, and the "little Queen" received a last kiss from her "darling King." While Pauline was putting her to bed, she invariably asked:

"Have I been good to-day? Is Our Lord pleased with me? Is Our Lady pleased with me? Will the angels stay with me?"

The answer was always "Yes," otherwise she would have cried all night.

The time came for Thérèse to prepare for her first Confession. Pauline had taught her that the priest takes the place of God, and that we must hide nothing from him. So she confessed her little faults with perfect truthfulness. It would have been the same if she had committed bigger ones. As she was too small for the

priest to see her if she knelt in the confessional, she stood at his knee.

She came out full of joy at the thought that her soul had been made whiter than snow. The priest had told her to love Our Lady very much, and she determined to try to do so.

SHE DETERMINED TO TRY TO LOVE OUR LADY.

As soon as she left the church, she stopped under a street-lamp, took out her rosary, which had been blessed, and, turning it over and over, examined it attentively.

"What are you doing, darling?" asked Pauline.

"I am looking to see what a blessed rosary is like."

From this time Thérèse always went to Confession before all the great Feasts of the Church, to make her soul whiter and whiter.

She loved every Feast as it came round, but the one she loved best, and for which she prepared herself most fervently, was Corpus Christi. She could not yet receive Our Lord, for then children did not make their First Communion when they were very small, as the Holy Father allows them to do now. She would look longingly at the white Host which the priest carried in the procession, and which he put on beautiful altars covered with flowers and lights. Thérèse, dressed in white, and wearing a wreath of roses, eagerly awaited her turn to strew her flowers. She would come quite close up to Our Lord, and she was never happier than when she thought she saw her fragrant petals kiss the golden monstrance.

The great Feasts did not come often, but every week brought a day which Thérèse loved dearly—Sunday, God's own Feast. She thought Sunday a delightful day, though in certain respects it was a solemn one.

In the morning they all went to High Mass, and at the sermon, their seats being far from the pulpit, they moved into the nave. Sometimes it was difficult to find a place, because of the crowd. But everyone gladly made room for little Thérèse and her father. Monsieur Guérin, her uncle, who sat in the churchwarden's bench,

was delighted to see the picture they made coming up the aisle. He called Thérèse his "little Sunbeam." It never occurred to the child herself that people were looking at them; her whole attention was riveted on the preacher. The first sermon she really understood was one on the Passion; it made a deep impression on her, though she was only five and a half. After that she understood the meaning of every instruction she heard.

The meals at "Les Buissonnets" on Sundays were usually very plain, so that the maids might be free to go to church. However, Pauline always gave Thérèse a treat by bringing her a cup of chocolate in bed.

If there was a fair in the town, Thérèse would go out with her father and sisters, but however gay the music of the merry-go-rounds, and however attractive the brightly coloured balloons, and the twirling "windmills," Monsieur Martin made it a rule never to buy anything on Sunday. In fact, to avoid making others work, he never travelled on that day unless absolutely obliged to do so.

Sunday passed all too quickly, and Thérèse enjoyed every moment of it till the evening. But after Compline, a sad feeling came over her. She thought of to-morrow, when everyday life would begin again, with lessons and work, and she wished that it could always be Sunday, as

she imagined it must be in Heaven. What added to this sadness was that they could not all be together, because the elder girls had to take it in turns to spend the evening with their cousins.

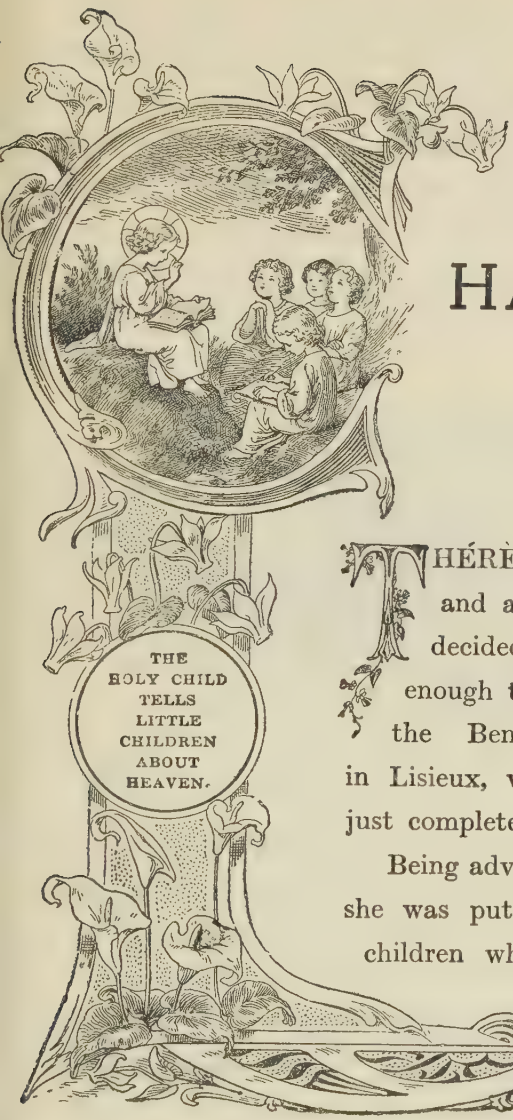
Thérèse, too, was invited sometimes, and

"LOOK, PAPA! MY NAME IS WRITTEN IN HEAVEN!"

on the way home she loved to look up at the twinkling stars. There was one bright cluster which she looked for particularly, because she saw in it a resemblance to the letter T.

"Look, Papa," she would say to her father, "my name is written in Heaven!"

Then she would tell him to lead her, and without looking where she was going she would throw back her head and gaze unweariedly at the starry skies.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

AT SCHOOL

THÉRÈSE was now eight and a half, and it was decided that she was old enough to go to school at the Benedictine Convent in Lisieux, where Léonie had just completed her studies.

Being advanced for her age, she was put in a class with children who were all older

than herself. This gave her a certain standing with her companions, and often during recreation they would gather round her to listen to the stories she told them. One of the mistresses put a stop to this because recreation was the time to run about and play.

THEY WOULD GATHER ROUND HER TO LISTEN TO THE STORIES

As Thérèse was always the first in the class, some of her classmates were jealous of her success, and paid her out by teasing her on every possible occasion. The poor little girl, who had been used to so much kindness at home, found it difficult to settle down at school, and such behaviour on the part of her companions was not likely to make her feel happier.

We might have thought that she would have appealed for protection to Céline, "the fearless," as she was called by her father. And Céline would certainly have stood up for her little sister.

But Thérèse would never tell tales. She preferred to bear her troubles alone, and only cried when she was sure no one could see her, that her companions might not be scolded on her account.

We have seen that Thérèse had never known anything but the greatest tenderness and love at home. But she was never spoilt. On the contrary, she was brought up very strictly.

She and her sisters had always before them the example of their father, who was absolutely self-forgetful. His coolness and courage were invaluable in any crisis. On one occasion, when a house was on fire, he risked his life in saving people from the flames.

Another time he rescued some young men from drowning, and once he was nearly drowned himself whilst saving the life of a man who was being sucked into a whirlpool.

More than once, he interfered to stop a street-brawl in which knives were being freely used. In short, he was always the first to bring help where help was needed.

An ardent patriot, it was a great sorrow that he had not been able to enlist during the war of 1870, though when the Prussians approached Alençon he went out several nights with the francs-tireurs, at the imminent risk of being shot had he been taken by the enemy.

THE BENEDICTINE CONVENT IN LISIEUX.

With such a father, there could be no fear that Thérèse would be brought up too indulgently.

Pauline had trained her not to be nervous. She used to send her at night to fetch something from the garden or from a distant room, and would take no excuses. After putting her to bed, she left her alone in the dark, though Thérèse slept in a big room some way from the others.

The children had chocolate every morning for breakfast when they were little; but as they grew older they

had soup instead, and chocolate only appeared on Sundays and feast-days. Marie used to give them lunch to take to school, but they had to make it last a certain number of days, or they went without. Other little girls brought cakes and sweets to eat during the morning, but Céline and Thérèse had to be content with a piece of dry bread till dinner-time.

If they did not get good marks at school, or if they were found fault with, it was never the mistresses who were blamed. Their authority was always upheld against their pupils.

Nor did Thérèse always have her sisters on her side in her little difficulties. It once happened that she showed vexation because her nurse had teased her. Victoire was clearly in the wrong, yet it was Thérèse who had to beg pardon, that she might learn to behave respectfully towards inferiors.

In spite of this strict training, Thérèse once gave way to a very natural desire of being noticed.

Her cousin, Marie Guérin, was always complaining of headaches, and on such occasions Marie's mother petted and coddled her. Now Thérèse often had a headache, but she never told anyone. Once, however, she thought she would make a fuss like Marie in order to get her share of sympathy. Accordingly she curled

herself up in an armchair in the corner of her aunt's drawing-room, whimpering:

"I've got *such* a headache!"

Everyone gathered round her, but it was so unlike her to complain that no one would believe she was only crying because of a headache, and instead of being comforted she was accused of telling stories, and of hiding the real cause of her tears. That was all Thérèse got for her pains, and she firmly resolved never to copy anyone again.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

PAULINE ENTERS CARMEL—THE ILLNESS OF THÉRÈSE

THÉRÈSE was soon to be separated from the "little mother" to whose tender guidance she owed so much.

One day Marie and Pauline were talking quietly together at the far end of the room in which Thérèse was doing her lessons, when all at once

Marie unconsciously raised her voice, and Thérèse caught these startling words:

"Oh, darling, we have never been separated from each other before! What shall I do without you when you have gone to Carmel?"

"Don't talk like that," replied Pauline; "you will break my heart! You know that it is only for Our Lord's sake that I am going away. I should never, never, have courage to leave you all if I were not going to be a nun. You will have to console Baby," she added in a lower voice, with a glance at Thérèse; "she will feel it dreadfully, she is so affectionate!"

There was a short silence, then Pauline went on:

"I have just seen Mother Prioress, and probably I shall enter next month."

At these words, Thérèse threw down her pen and, burying her face in her hands, burst into a storm of sobs.

Realizing that she had heard everything, Pauline took her on her lap to try and comfort her. The child put her arms round her sister's neck and said through her tears:

"Oh, Pauline, you know you promised to wait for me, and to take me with you into a desert when I was grown up!"

From the time Thérèse was three years old, she had often heard people saying that Pauline would be a nun some day, and without understanding very well what it meant she had said to herself:

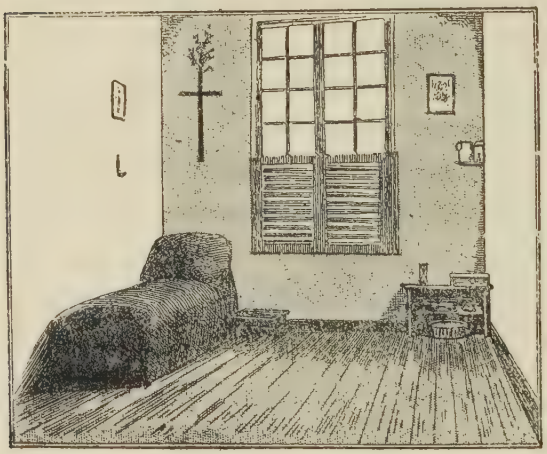
"I will be a nun too."

Pauline had practically promised to wait till her "little girl" was old enough to go with her, and now she was going without even having told her!

When the two were left alone, Pauline began to explain what the life was like in Carmel. She said that nowadays people could no longer go away into the wilderness to become hermits, but that in the Church there was an Order whose members could live a hermit's life in the midst of the world. Strictly enclosed convents had taken the place of deserts. No stranger was ever admitted within their walls, and even the nuns' relations could only see them through an iron grille. Each nun had her own little cell, in which she lived alone, working and praying. Her bed was a straw mattress on hard boards; two little wooden benches served as chair and table; a water-jug and a lantern completed the furniture of this strange room. The food of the Carmelites was in keeping with this austere dwelling. They never ate meat, but had vegetables instead.

The description fired Thérèse with enthusiasm. This,

she thought, was all we could want; the less we have, the happier we must be. The conversation made a deep impression on her, and a few days afterwards, when thinking over what Pauline had said, it flashed upon her that Carmel was the desert where God wanted *her* to go, and she made up her mind to be a Carmelite.



EACH NUN HAD HER OWN LITTLE CELL.

She told Pauline her desire, and Pauline promised to take her to see Mother Prioress, to whom she could confide her secret. But to her great disappointment, Mother Prioress said that postulants of nine were rather too young to be received, and that Thérèse would have to wait till she was at least sixteen.

The dreaded day at last came when she was to part from her beloved Pauline. It was the second of October, 1882.

While Monsieur Martin, accompanied by Marie and his brother-in-law, took Pauline to the convent, Thérèse, with Léonie, Céline, and her cousins, went to Mass with Madame Guérin. They were all crying so bitterly that everyone in the Church looked at them in astonishment. But that did not stop Thérèse's tears. Her grief was so great that she wondered how the sun could go on shining and how the birds could sing!

In the afternoon she went to see her "little mother," now Sister Agnes of Jesus. Her sorrow became still more intense when she realized that she could only speak to her sister through the grille! She had been accustomed to spend long hours alone with her beloved Pauline, telling her all her most precious secrets, how much she loved Our Lord, and how many "acts" she had made for Him. Now she understood that those happy times were gone for ever, and that Pauline would no longer be able to listen to her little confidences.

In spite of the very deep suffering she endured, Thérèse tried hard to be sweet-tempered and good with everyone.

The strain told on her health. She began to suffer from a continuous headache, which she bore for several months without complaining.

But it happened that while her father and elder

sister were away from home, the pain in her head became very violent, and her uncle and aunt, with whom she was staying, telegraphed to Monsieur Martin to return. He came at once, to find his dear little Queen so ill that

SHE WAS ALLOWED TO SIT ON HER "LITTLE MOTHER'S" KNEE.

he thought she was dying. It was with great difficulty that they were able to take her home to "Les Buissonnets." For a long time she lay between life and death, and the doctors declared she could never recover.

Meanwhile, the time drew near when Sister Agnes of

Thérèse at the Age of Eight strewing Flowers before the Blessed Sacrament.

To face page 86.

Jesus was to be clothed in the Carmelite habit. The family avoided talking of this event before the little invalid for fear of exciting her, for they took for granted she would not be able to go. But Thérèse was sure that God would allow her to see her darling Pauline on that great day.

And contrary to all expectations, she was actually well enough to go to the ceremony. She not only saw her "little mother" in her beautiful bridal dress; she was allowed to sit on her knee to be kissed and petted in the old way.

But on the very next day she had a serious relapse.

All possible remedies were tried, with no effect. Marie nursed her with the most tender devotion, and rarely left her side. Léonie and Céline used to spend long hours with her, trying to amuse her, but nothing could rouse or interest Thérèse. It seemed as if a miracle alone could save her.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

OUR LADY'S SMILE

THERE had been for many years in the Martin family a statue of Our Lady, which they valued very highly. Where it originally came from is not known, but it had been given to Monsieur Martin, when a boy, by an old lady, who had the reputation of being a saint.

It was not like an ordinary plaster statue, and though not very big, was so heavy that even a strong person found it difficult to carry. Morning and night prayers were always said before the statue, to which the whole family had a great devotion. In fact, the hands had been kissed so often that some of the fingers had had to be replaced several times. Every year when the month of May came round, the children would gather flowers in the country, and Our Lady's altar was beautifully decorated with snowy hawthorn branches. Little Thérèse was delighted at this; she used to clap her hands and jump for joy as she looked at the statue.

Madame Martin always said that no one would ever know all she owed to Our Lady, and after her death, when the family were removing to Lisieux, their first thought was for this great treasure. They took it with them to "Les Buissonnets," and it was placed in the room in which they assembled every day for prayers.

Thérèse occupied this room all the time she was ill, and the statue stood beside her bed on an altar decorated with blue hangings. When the pain was less acute, she loved to weave garlands of daisies and forget-me-nots for Our Lady, and she often looked at the statue and prayed to be cured.

One day, in the month of May, when she was very

much worse, her father came into the room in great distress. He gave Marie some money, and told her to write to Paris for a Novena of Masses to be said at the shrine of Our Lady of Victories to obtain the cure of his poor little Queen.

During this Novena, on Sunday, May 13, 1883, Thérèse became so ill that she did not even recognize her sisters. Marie felt sure she was dying, and throwing herself on her knees before the statue she implored Our Lady's help with the fervour and insistence of a mother pleading for her child's life. Léonie and Céline joined their prayers with hers, and the sick child begged her Heavenly Mother to have pity on her.

It was a united cry of faith which forced the gates of Heaven.

Suddenly, the statue seemed to be alive. . . . Our Lady came towards the bed. Her face was indescribably beautiful, but it was her wonderful smile which filled Thérèse with joy. Like the warm rays of the sun after a storm, it shone on the little sufferer. At once all her pain and weariness vanished, and she knew she was cured.

Thérèse is cured by Our Lady, May 13, 1883.

To face page 108.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THÉRÈSE PREPARES FOR HER FIRST COMMUNION

IMMEDIATELY after this marvellous recovery, the whole family went on a visit to friends at Alençon. During her stay, Thérèse was petted and made much of by everyone, and provided with new amusements every day. At ten years old the heads of little girls are easily

turned, but Thérèse's illness had made her more thoughtful. She understood better now the vanity of earthly things, and in spite of the gay time she was having at Alençon, her one desire was to return to "Les Buissonnets" to prepare for her First Communion.

How she longed to receive Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament!

When quite a tiny child, if she saw her sisters going to Midnight Mass, she would beg them to take her with them, so that she too might receive "little Jesus."

Her delight was unbounded when Céline made her First Communion. Thérèse had still four years to wait before the great day came for her, but she did not think it was too long to get ready for Our Lord. She began her preparation with Céline, and shared the instructions, given by Pauline, who had not yet entered Carmel. Thérèse's longing to receive Jesus grew so intense that, happening one day to meet the Bishop of Bayeux in the street, she forgot her natural shyness and was going to run up to him to ask if she might make her First Communion before the fixed age, when Marie held her back. Her elder sister wished to teach her not to ask for special favours, but to do like everybody else. And

so long months had to pass before her desire was realized.

She used the time well, and made a number of little sacrifices. These she offered to the

SHE WAS GOING TO RUN UP TO HIM.

Holy Child as so many flowers which were to become a soft cradle for Him to rest in when He visited her heart.

A few months before her First Communion, she counted these "acts" and marked them down in a little book which Pauline had sent her from the Carmelite convent.

SHE MADE A NUMBER OF LITTLE SACRIFICES WHICH SHE OFFERED TO THE HOLY CHILD AS SO MANY FLOWERS.

Among the "acts" there was one very hard one which Thérèse had to make every day. She was so fond of reading that she could have spent the whole day with a book, but her sisters had decided that half an hour a day was quite enough for her. As soon, therefore, as the time was up, she would promptly shut the book even if she were in the middle of a most interesting passage.

She did many other things to please Our Lord.

Often, at the school recreation, she would give up her favourite games and play those which the others liked.

At table, if she did not care for what was put before her, she ate it without making any fuss, and never grumbled if she did not get what she wanted.

One day her father told Céline that he would allow her to have drawing lessons. Then, turning to Thérèse, who had long wanted to learn drawing, he added:

"And what about you, little Queen? Would you like to have lessons too?"

Before she had time to answer an eager "Yes," Marie said:

"It would not be worth while; she has not the same taste as Céline."

Thérèse need only have said a word and her request would have been granted, but she wanted to give Our Lord a very big "act," and so she kept silence. . . .

When Pauline entered Carmel, Marie became Thérèse's new "little mother." Every day she would take Thérèse on her knee and speak to her about her First Communion. She told her that all the happiness of her life on earth would depend upon that great event.

One evening, she spoke so earnestly about the value

of suffering that all at once Thérèse felt a great desire to suffer much, that she might give God every possible proof of love.

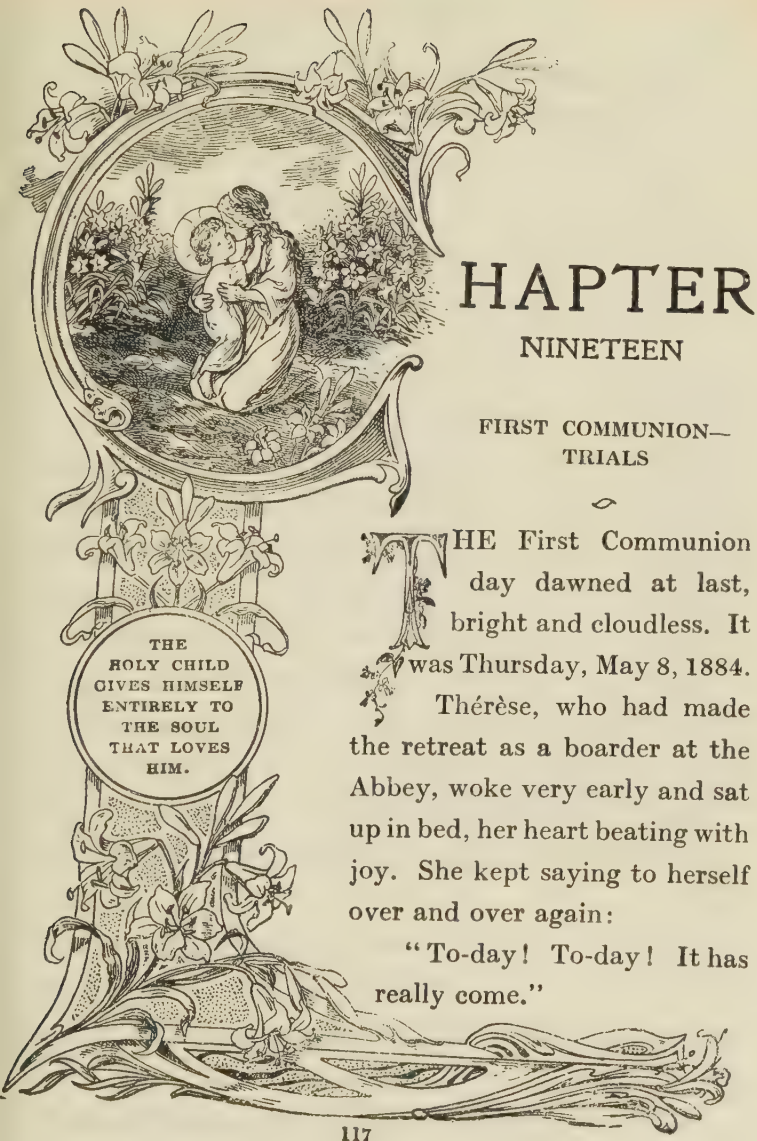
SHE WOULD HIDE HERSELF IN A CORNER OF HER ROOM.

She used to meditate a great deal, and would often hide herself in a corner of her room, which she could shut

off with the bed-curtains, and there reflect on the swift passing of this life and on Eternity. She called this "thinking."

"I am only just eleven," she would say to herself, "yet already I have lost my mother, Pauline has gone away, and soon my other sisters will go too. Life is only a dream, a kind of ante-room where we get ready to appear before Our Lord. I will not waste my time on silly trifles, but I will try and have my soul very beautiful when my turn comes."

Such serious thoughts did not make Thérèse any less a child. It is true she had become more reserved since her mother's death, and she was so extremely sensitive that the smallest thing would make her cry. But she was ashamed of this weakness and set herself bravely to fight against it and to strengthen her will.



CHAPTER NINETEEN

FIRST COMMUNION—TRIALS

THE First Communion day dawned at last, bright and cloudless. It was Thursday, May 8, 1884.

Thérèse, who had made the retreat as a boarder at the Abbey, woke very early and sat up in bed, her heart beating with joy. She kept saying to herself over and over again:

"To-day! To-day! It has really come."

When it was time to get up, she was dressed in her snowy white frock, and with her little companions went in procession to the chapel. She never forgot the impression made on her by the beautiful hymn which was sung just before Communion:

"Oh, Holy Altar, thronged with angels."

Who can describe the sweetness of Thérèse's first meeting with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament! She had waited long for Him, and now that He had come at last her happiness was so great that she could not keep back her tears. Her companions, much surprised to see her cry, said to each other afterwards:

"What was the matter with Thérèse? Do you think she was afraid of having done anything wrong? Perhaps she was crying because her mother and the Carmelite sister she is so fond of were not there."

They did not understand it was the joy which Our Lord had poured into her heart which had overflowed in tears.

She could not possibly be sad because her mother was not there, for Heaven had come to her with Our Lord, and she felt that her mother was very near to her.

Neither was she crying because she missed Pauline.

In fact, she was more closely united to her sister than before, for at the very time that Thérèse made her First Communion, Pauline was professed as a Carmelite nun, and gave herself to Jesus for ever. Thérèse was perfectly happy, and even the beautiful presents she received did not take her thoughts away from Our Lord.

WHO CAN DESCRIBE THE SWEETNESS OF THÉRÈSE'S FIRST MEETING WITH JESUS?

Another great event of that memorable day was her Consecration to Our Lady. Probably because she was motherless, Thérèse was chosen to recite the act of Consecration in the name of her companions She said it very earnestly, asking her Heavenly Mother to take the place of her own mother and to keep her safe

from harm. In the evening, Monsieur Martin took his "little Queen" to Carmel. There she saw Pauline, and her happiness was complete as she thought that the day would soon come when she would join her "little mother" and make ready for Heaven by her side.

THÉRÈSE WAS CHOSEN TO RECITE THE ACT OF CONSECRATION.

From the time of her First Communion the one desire of Thérèse was to receive Our Lord again, and she prepared for all her Communions with the greatest fervour.

On June 14 of the same year, she was confirmed, and that day, too, left ineffaceable memories behind.

On one occasion, during the preparatory Retreat, Thérèse seemed lost in thought. Céline asked her what she was thinking about, and she poured forth in burning words all she felt about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit

in the soul. As she spoke, such a light shone in her eyes that Céline could not meet her gaze, but had to lower her own.

But these bright days were not to last. Thérèse had asked for suffering, and Our Lord was about to grant her prayer.

SHE TURNED TO HER BABY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN HEAVEN.

All at once her mind became filled with darkness—that is, with terrible scruples which never left her any peace. Her simplest actions and thoughts seemed to her to be sins, and made her miserable and unhappy. She, who was later to attract so many souls by her loving confidence in God, became troubled by constant fears. Her only comfort during this sad time was her sister Marie, whose wise advice she obediently followed.

But even this help she was not to have long.

On October 15, 1886, Marie went to join Pauline in the Carmelite Convent. Thérèse was then thirteen and a half.

When Marie left, she cried as if her heart would break. What would happen to her now that she had no one to guide her and take charge of her soul ? In her grief she turned to her baby brothers and sisters in Heaven, for she felt sure that they, who had never known trouble or fear, would pity their sister who was suffering on earth.

Her prayer was answered. Suddenly the heavy cloud of sadness lifted, she saw clearly again, and her soul was once more filled with peace. It was God's reward for her obedience and her trust in Him.

CHAPTER TWENTY

A CHRISTMAS GRACE

THE HOLY CHILD POINTS OUT THE WAY OF PERFECTION TO THE SOUL THAT LISTENS TO HIS VOICE.

SOON after this great grace, Thérèse received another as a Christmas gift from the Holy Child.

Since her mother's death, as we have seen, she had become extremely sensitive. This, however, was much more the result of her deeply affectionate nature than of vanity or self-love.

If she did not get good marks at school, she was inconsolable because she thought her father would be disappointed. If she had annoyed or hurt anyone, even without meaning it, she would cry bitterly. When at last they succeeded in comforting her, she would begin to cry again for having cried! The poor child realized this was a weakness, and felt it very much. How could she be a Carmelite unless she overcame it? But Our Lord was about to give her the grace of a victory over herself.

It was Christmas Eve, 1886.

Thérèse, as usual, had put her shoes in the fireplace to be filled with presents. But when the family came in from Mass, she overheard her father saying:

"This is really too babyish for a big girl like Thérèse. I hope it will be the last time she does it!"

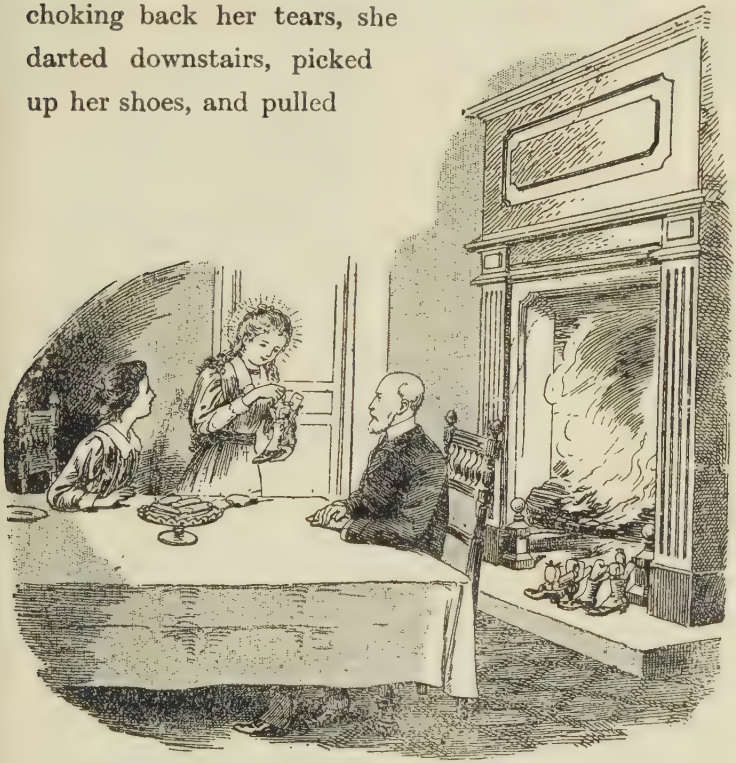
His words pierced her sensitive heart to the quick, and, with the tears rushing to her eyes, she was going upstairs to take off her coat when Céline whispered to her:

"Don't go down again just yet; you will only cry if you look at your shoes when Papa is there!"

Suddenly it flashed on Thérèse that if she wanted to overcome herself she must run downstairs at once,

without stopping to think how hard it was, otherwise it would be too late.

In a moment her mind was made up. She did not even wait till Céline had finished speaking, but choking back her tears, she darted downstairs, picked up her shoes, and pulled



SHE PULLED OUT THE PRESENTS, ONE BY ONE, LAUGHING MERRILY.

out the presents, one by one, laughing merrily all the time. Her father was delighted to see her looking so happy, and there was not the slightest trace of

annoyance on his face. As for Céline, she thought she must be dreaming.

But it was no dream.

Thérèse had bravely overcome herself, and from that moment her sensitiveness hardly ever troubled her again.

CHAPTER
TWENTY-ONE

THE ZEAL OF THÉRÈSE FOR SOULS

NOW that she was free from scruples and had conquered her chief failing, Thérèse's mind rapidly developed. A great zeal for souls sprang up in her heart, together with a desire to forget herself, and from that moment she was completely

happy. She longed to love Our Lord more and to make others love Him, and she missed no opportunity of speaking about Him to those who did not know Him.

In her eagerness to help souls, she took charge of two little beggar children. They knew nothing about God when they came to her, but she taught them so well that in a short time they were quite changed. She did not promise them happiness in this world, but she told them about the eternal reward which Our Lord keeps in Heaven to give to those who are good. It was a great delight to her when she saw her little charges anxious to make "acts" that they might store up the heavenly treasures of which they heard her speak.

But her zeal did not stop here. She would slip medals of Our Lady into the coat pockets of workmen, and she even wanted to help the dying that she might convert them.

It would take too long to tell all she did, but an account of the conversion of a famous murderer must not be omitted.

The man's name was Pranzini.

He was born at Alexandria, and was brought up a good Catholic by his pious mother. He had been well educated and could speak eight languages fluently, so that he easily obtained a post as interpreter.

Unfortunately, however, he fell into bad ways, gradually squandered all his savings, and finally landed in France utterly destitute. He made his way to Paris, where he went from bad to worse, until he ended by murdering three people in order to get their money. One of his victims was a child of eleven.

SHE TOOK CHARGE OF TWO LITTLE BEGGARS.

The whole of France was shocked by the terrible crime. The murderer was tracked to Marseilles, where he was arrested as he was about to embark for Alexandria.

While in prison in Paris, he spent all his leisure translating bad books into different languages. He

always denied his crime, and only consented to see the prison chaplain in the hope of getting some tobacco, or because he wanted to while away the time.

Strange to say, though utterly indifferent to religion, Pranzini still honoured Our Lady. When the Feast of the Assumption came, he expressed a desire to hear Mass. He told the priest that he had never given up the practice of going to church to salute Our Lady's statue, and that formerly, in Alexandria, he had looked upon it as the greatest honour to carry her banner in processions. This was his only avowal.

Thérèse had heard his sad history, and was so distressed at the thought of his dying unrepentant that she undertook to convert him. But how was she to do it? She could not go to Paris and visit him in his cell, but she took a far simpler and more efficacious means. She multiplied her "acts" and did her utmost to invent new ones, in order to save his soul from hell. Still, realizing that all she could possibly do was too little to obtain so great a favour, she had Mass said for her intention and prayed her hardest.

Meanwhile the news of Pranzini became more and more depressing. Yet the faith of Thérèse never wavered. She said to Our Lord:

"I am sure, my God, that You will pardon poor

Pranzini because I am asking You with such confidence. I would be certain even if he shows no outward sign of repentance before he dies, but I beg You, dear Lord, to give me the consolation of an outward sign."

"I AM SURE, MY GOD, THAT YOU WILL PARDON POOR PRANZINI."

She waited anxiously day after day.

The execution was to take place at dawn on August 31, 1887.

When the day came, more than 30,000 spectators assembled outside the prison to see the death sentence carried out.

Pranzini stood before the fatal guillotine, bound hand and foot. To the very last he had refused the help of the priest, had cursed his judges, and sworn that he was innocent. The executioners were about to lead him to the block when, moved by a sudden inspiration, he turned round and cried to the priest:

"The crucifix—give it to me quickly!"

It was held to his lips, and as he kissed Our Lord's sacred Feet he gasped out, in a voice broken with sorrow:

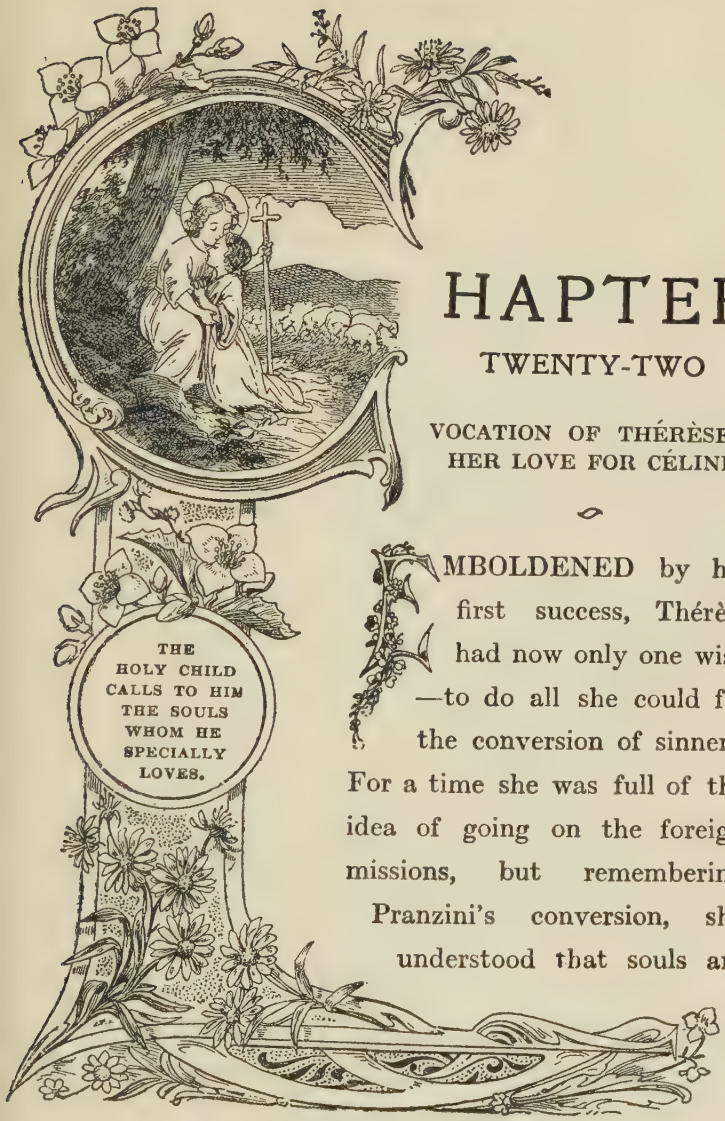
"I have sinned."

The priest answered in God's name:

"I absolve thee."

A few seconds later the knife fell and severed the head from the body. It was the end, but an end like that of the Good Thief.

When Thérèse heard the news, she was so overcome with wonder and delight that she had to run away and hide lest others should see her intense joy and question her. She thanked Our Lord for giving her this wonderful proof of the power of prayer, and resolved to continue the hidden Apostolate which He had shown to be so fruitful.



THE HOLY CHILD CALLS TO HIM THE SOULS WHOM HE SPECIALLY LOVES.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

VOCATION OF THÉRÈSE—HER LOVE FOR CÉLINE

EMBOLDENED by her first success, Thérèse had now only one wish—to do all she could for the conversion of sinners. For a time she was full of the idea of going on the foreign missions, but remembering Pranzini's conversion, she understood that souls are

saved chiefly by prayer and sacrifice, and definitely made up her mind to be a Carmelite.

Another reason which helped her decision was that Carmelites pray particularly for priests, and there seemed to her to be no greater and nobler vocation than to consecrate one's life to helping the ministers of God. Though barely fourteen, she wanted to set to work at once and to enter the Carmelite convent the following year on Christmas night, the anniversary of her great victory.

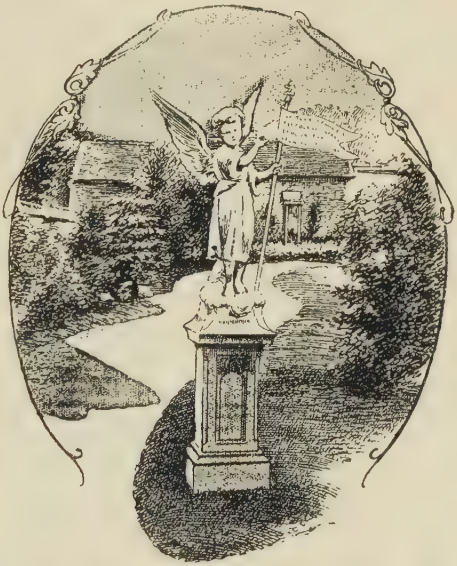
But would her family consent to her going so young ?

She was not afraid of what the Carmelites themselves would say. Mother Prioress was quite willing to receive her, and Sister Agnes of Jesus encouraged her, but she dreaded grieving Céline. The two sisters had no secrets from each other, and it seemed almost impossible to break the ties which bound them so closely together. Céline, however, had already guessed the intention of Thérèse, and, far from opposing it, she did all she could to help her to carry out her plan.

But there was still her father to tell, and this was the hardest trial of all. How could she tell him his " Queen " was going to leave him when he had already given three of his children to God ?

Before confiding her secret to him, she prayed a great deal and waited for the Feast of Pentecost, asking the Holy Spirit to inspire her what to say.

Her opportunity came in the evening after Vespers. Monsieur Martin was sitting in the garden, and from the expression on his face she could see that his heart was full of peace. All around was calm and beautiful, the tall tree-tops gilded by the rays of the setting sun, the birds twittering their evening hymn. Without a word she sat down beside her father, her eyes already wet with tears. He looked at her lovingly.



THE STATUE OF THE ANGEL MARKS THE SPOT WHERE THÉRÈSE ASKED HER FATHER'S PERMISSION TO ENTER CARMEL.

"What is it, little Queen? Tell me," he said.

And as if to hide his own feelings, he rose from his

seat and walked slowly up and down, holding close to him his last and dearest child. Through her tears Thérèse told him that she wanted very soon to become a Carmelite.

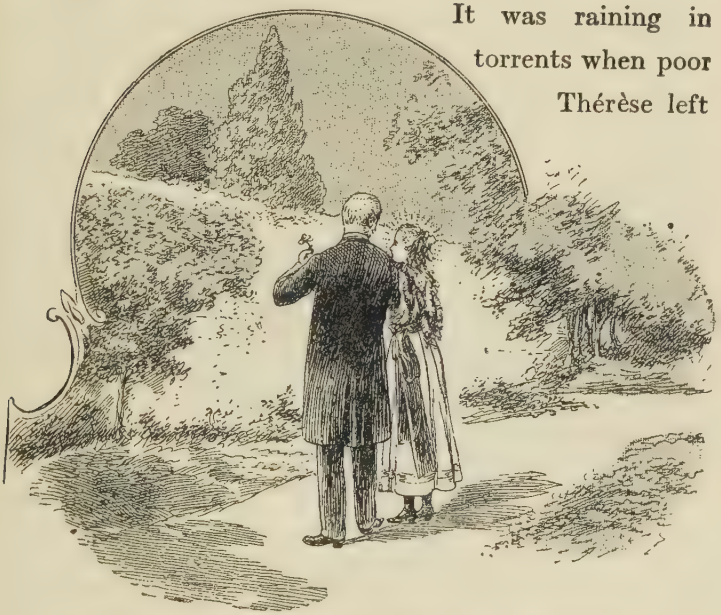
He listened, and his tears fell too. He did not try to turn her from her vocation; he simply pointed out to her that she was very young to take such an important step. But she pleaded her cause so eloquently that he was completely won over, and answered as a saint would have done. Wishing to turn the conversation a little from the painful subject of their separation, he picked a tiny white flower and explained to her how God had made it grow and blossom by giving it cooling dew and the warm rays of the sun. And Thérèse thought she was listening to the story of her own life. . . .

How much she must have loved Our Lord to have been ready for His sake to leave her father! Even when she was a baby she could not bear to think that he would die and go away from her. And now she was asking to be separated from him.

But his consent did not finally decide her future. Her uncle, Monsieur Guérin, had also to be consulted, and he was at first very much opposed to her going. He gave way at last, but no sooner was this difficulty overcome than another arose—the Superior of the Carmelites

refused to receive her till she was twenty-one. He said, however, that he was only the delegate of the Bishop, and that his decision would be altered if she could obtain his lordship's permission.

It was raining in torrents when poor Thérèse left



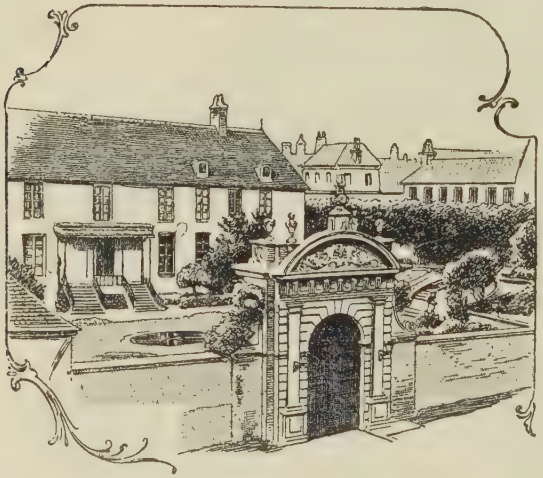
THÉRÈSE THOUGHT SHE WAS LISTENING TO THE STORY OF HER OWN LIFE.

the Superior's house. She had always noticed that when she was sad the sky wept in sympathy with her, and when she was happy it was blue and cloudless.

Her father could not console her. At last he suggested that they should go together to Bayeux to visit

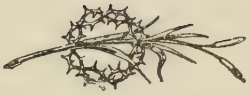
Mgr. Hugonin, and she gladly accepted the offer. To look older than she really was, she put up her hair, which usually fell in curls down her back.

It was an anxious moment when she, who generally left all the talking to her sisters, found herself in the presence of the Bishop, explaining to him the object of her visit. Monseigneur hesitated, and suggested that she ought to stay a little longer with her father. But Monsieur Martin came to the aid of his "little Queen," saying that he intended shortly to take her on a pilgrimage to Rome, and that if his lordship could not give the desired permission, they would ask it of the Pope. The Bishop was as much touched by the generosity of the father as by the earnestness of the child; but he let them



THE BISHOP'S HOUSE AT BAYEUX IN 1887.

go without giving a definite answer. It seemed to Thérèse as if all her hopes were now shattered for ever, but in spite of her grief there was peace in her heart, because she trusted Our Lord and only wanted to do His Will.



THE CHILD JESUS ACCOMPANIES THE SOUL THAT LOVES HIM IN THE PILGRIMAGE OF LIFE.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

JOURNEY TO ROME

ON November 4, 1887, three days after the visit to Bayeux, Céline and Thérèse set out with their father for Rome.

The first stopping-place was Paris. They saw all the wonderful sights of the capital, but nothing delighted Thérèse so much as the shrine of Our

Lady of Victories. She prayed earnestly to her Blessed Mother, who had smiled on her in her childhood, and as we cannot love Our Lady without loving St. Joseph too, she put herself under his protection, asking him to take care of her as he had taken

SHE PRAYED EARNESTLY TO HER BLESSED MOTHER.
IN ROME THE HOLY CHILD PRICKED HIS LITTLE BALL (P. 149).

care of the Holy Child and His Mother during their life on earth.

The travellers continued their journey through beautiful Switzerland, with its gigantic snow-capped

mountains, its lakes and waterfalls, its pink heather and gorgeous sunsets. Then, crossing the Alps by the famous St. Gothard tunnel, they entered Italy.

At Milan, Thérèse and Céline climbed to the top of the wonderful Cathedral.

From Milan they went to Venice, and thence to Loretto, where the house of the Holy Family is honoured.

THÉRÈSE WITH HER FATHER AND CÉLINE IN VENICE.

The following night they were awakened by the voices of the porters shouting:

"Rome! Rome!"

It was not a dream; they were in Rome at last.

The two sisters visited all the monuments of the Eternal City, and were especially struck with the Coliseum and the Catacombs.

The Catacombs are vast subterranean passages, where the early Christians used to hide from persecution, and where they buried their dead.

THE HOUSE OF THE HOLY FAMILY CARRIED BY ANGELS TO LORETO.

The Coliseum is an immense arena built of stone, and large enough to hold thousands of spectators. The Romans came there to watch the Christians being devoured by wild beasts, or tortured in other horrible ways, because they would not give up their faith.

Thérèse, who loved the martyrs, was very anxious to go down to a part of the arena which was closed to the

public because the excavations then being carried on made the descent dangerous. But all the same, she and

SHE ASKED OUR LORD THAT SHE, TOO, MIGHT BE A MARTYR.

Céline darted forward in front of the guide, boldly crossed the barriers, and, clambering over the walls, which

crumbled under their weight, succeeded in reaching the spot without any mishap. As Thérèse kissed the sacred ground on which the martyrs had shed their blood, she asked Our Lord that she, too, might be a martyr for His love. To return, they had to make a difficult ascent, but were soon back safe and sound with their father, who, seeing them so happy, had not the heart to scold them. He even seemed proud of their courage.

They spent six days seeing the wonders of Rome. On the seventh day they were to have the great privilege of an audience with Leo XIII. Thérèse had been longing for it, and at the same time she dreaded it because of what she had planned to do.

The audience began after the Pope's Mass. Dressed in black, with black mantillas, according to the etiquette prescribed, Céline and Thérèse joined the long line of pilgrims and advanced slowly through the great halls of the Vatican, till they came to a large room, hung with red tapestry, where Leo XIII. was seated on a raised chair, surrounded by dignitaries of the Church.

Thérèse felt her heart beat violently, and her nervousness increased when the Vicar-General of Bayeux, who was standing to the right of His Holiness, announced in a loud voice that no one was to speak to the Pope. She

turned to her sister with an appealing glance. "Speak," was Céline's whispered reply.

A moment later Thérèse found herself kneeling before the Holy Father. After she had kissed his foot and his extended hand, she raised her eyes and said imploringly:

"Holy Father, I have a great favour to ask of you."

The Pope bent his head, and his dark penetrating eyes seemed to read her very soul.

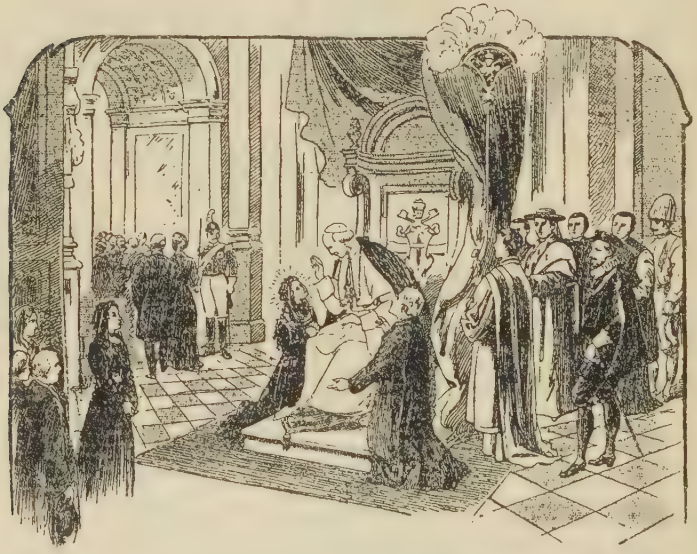
DRESSED IN BLACK, WITH BLACK MANTILLAS, THÉRÈSE AND CÉLINE JOINED THE LONG LINE OF PILGRIMS.

"Holy Father," she continued, "in honour of your Jubilee, allow me to become a Carmelite when I am fifteen."

The Vicar-General, astonished and annoyed, interrupted:

"Most Holy Father, this child wishes to join the Carmelites, and the Superiors are now considering the matter."

"Well, my child," said His Holiness, "do as the Superiors shall decide."



JOINING HER HANDS AND RESTING THEM ON THE POPE'S KNEES.

Joining her hands and resting them on the Pope's knees, Thérèse made a last effort:

"Holy Father, if you will only say yes, everyone else will agree."

Leo XIII. looked at her fixedly, and slowly and emphatically said:

"Well, well, child, you shall enter if it be God's will."

She was about to repeat her request when two of the noble guards made a sign for her to rise. The Pope held out his hand to her to kiss, and, blessing her, followed her with his eyes as she moved away.

She left the audience-room in tears, and the whole of that day the fair Italian sky was veiled with dark clouds, and wept in sympathy with her. Her great plan had failed. But she had done her utmost to follow the call of God, and her soul was at peace. She remembered that she had long ago offered herself to the Holy Child to be His little "plaything." Having noticed that children, as a rule, do not care much for expensive toys, she had given herself to Him as a cheap toy, a little ball which He could throw about, and treat just as He liked. In Rome He pricked His little ball, no doubt to see what it was made of, and finding it full of love for Himself, He wanted to test it still further, and sent it rolling into a corner. There it lay four long months, and then, at last, the Holy Child picked up His toy again.

When Thérèse got back to France, she renewed her

request to the Bishop. Every morning her father went with her to meet the postman, to see if there was a letter from Bayeux.

The letter came on December 28, Feast of the Holy Innocents. It was addressed to the Prioress of the Carmelites, and gave permission for Thérèse to enter

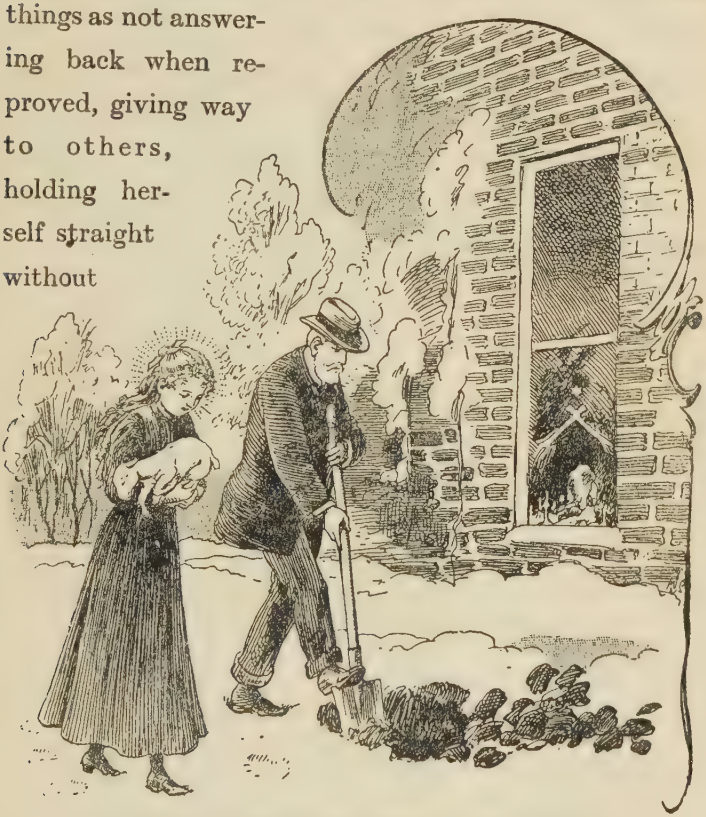
AT LAST THE HOLY CHILD PICKED UP HIS TOY AGAIN.

immediately. But alas! the Prioress thought it wiser to defer the entry till the following Easter.

After having already overcome so many obstacles, this final delay was a sad trial to poor Thérèse. In her disappointment she was tempted for a moment to get all the enjoyment she could out of the remaining months at home. But Our Lord made her see the value of this

time of waiting. She resolved not to lose a moment of it, and to try to be still more mortified.

Her mortifications consisted simply of such little things as not answering back when reproved, giving way to others, holding herself straight without



SHE BURIED IT UNDER THE SNOW IN HER GARDEN.

lolling lazily against the backs of the chairs, and doing little kindnesses to those around her. If anything in her

daily life tried her—if, for example, she lost one of the prettiest birds from her aviary—she quickly raised her heart to God and tried to take the little cross from His Hand.

One day, her father gave her a white woolly lamb as a pet. But she had hardly got it when it died. She buried it under the snow in her garden, and its death made her understand that we must be ready to part with the most innocent joys.

THE CHILD JESUS DREAMS OF ALL HE WILL SUFFER FOR OUR SAKES.

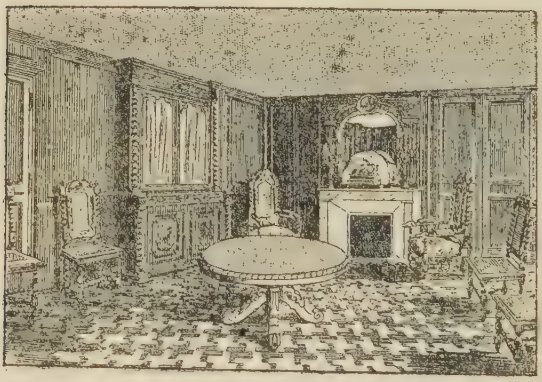
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

CARMEL—THE HOLY DEATH OF THÉRÈSE

MONDAY, April 9, 1888, was the day fixed for Thérèse to enter Carmel.

The evening before, there was a family gathering at "Les Buissonnets," and, as if to make the separation harder, it seemed to her that everyone was kinder than ever that night.

The next morning, after saying a last good-bye to the dear home of her childhood, Thérèse, accompanied by her relations, set out for the convent. She herself was the only one who did not shed a tear, but as she led the way to the cloister door, her heart beat so violently that she wondered if she were going to die. After kissing her beloved Céline, she knelt down for her father's blessing, and then the convent gates closed upon her.



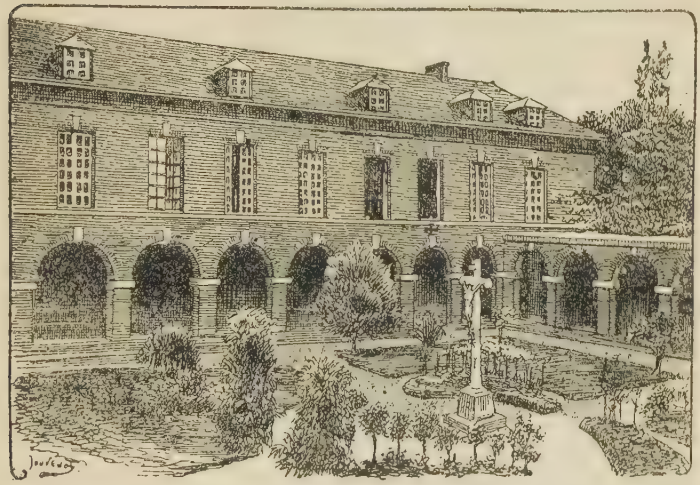
THERE WAS A FAMILY GATHERING AT LES BUISSONNETS.

. . . . . .

The nuns never forgot the impression made on them that day when they saw Thérèse come in, with such a heavenly expression on her face that she seemed like an angel in visible form.

Everything in the convent delighted her, especially her little bare cell with its rough furniture and white-washed walls. The joy she found in poverty was so great that she felt amply rewarded for all she had given up.

While she was still a postulant she had the happiness of assisting at the Profession of her sister Marie, now Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart. Being the youngest of the Community, Thérèse was chosen to place the crown of white roses on her sister's head, according to



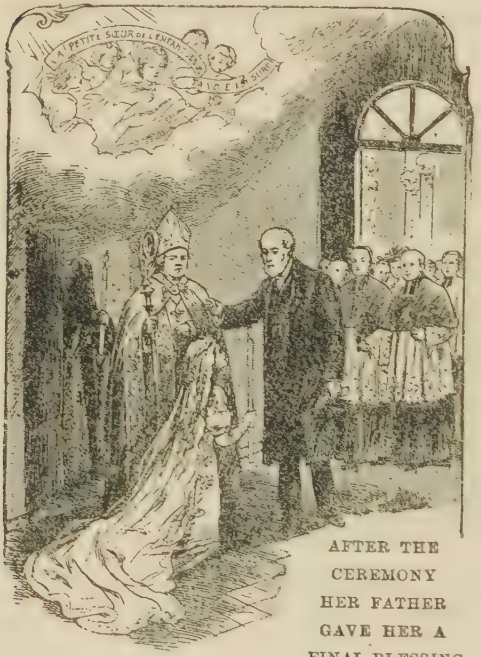
THE COURTYARD OF THE CARMELITE CONVENT (THE CELL MARKED WITH A + IS THAT OCCUPIED BY SAINT THÉRÈSE).

Carmelite custom. It was fitting that she should render this honour to Marie, her godmother, who had shared with Pauline the duty of bringing her up, and to whom she owed so much.

A little later, on January 10, 1889, there was another ceremony, and Thérèse received the habit of Carmel.

Dressed as a bride, she presented herself at the cloister door. Her father was waiting for her outside.

"Ah, my little Queen!" he cried, advancing to meet her.



AFTER THE CEREMONY HER FATHER GAVE HER A FINAL BLESSING.

Then giving her his arm, they made their solemn entry into the chapel. After the ceremony, her father kissed her and gave her a final blessing. Her mother, too, was blessing her from Heaven, and her brothers and sisters were looking down and helping her to begin her new life with fervour.

She then re-entered the enclosure, and followed the nuns in procession down the cloister. When they came to the Altar of the Holy Child, resplendent with flowers

and lights, she saw that the courtyard was covered with snow. She loved snow, and had prayed for it to fall on her clothing day, that the earth might be robed in white like herself. Our Lord had granted her simple request. She was touched at this further proof of His love, and thought to herself that no earthly bridegroom could make a single flake of snow fall from the sky to please his bride. . . .

SHE SAW, TO HER DELIGHT, THAT THE COURTYARD WAS COVERED WITH SNOW.

At last, the assistants, waiting with the Bishop in the

Sanctuary, saw through the large grille the "Little Queen" of a few moments before. She was much changed. Her hair had been cut off, and she wore a coarse robe of serge and a white veil. Her face was radiant with joy. She was a Carmelite at last.

SHE WORE A ROBE OF COARSE SERGE AND A WHITE VEIL.

Eighteen months later, September 8, 1890, she made her vows and gave herself to Our Lord for ever.

But that day her father was not there; he was too ill to come, and his absence was a bitter trial. She never saw him again, for he had to bear the cross of a painful illness for six long years before his death. Céline

nursed him all the time with the utmost devotion. When her mission was finished, she, too, became a Carmelite, and was instructed in her new life by Thérèse.

A year later, Marie Guérin, the "little hermit," joined her playmate in the "desert," and the game of their childhood became a reality.

There is little to tell of the life of Thérèse in Carmel; its secrets are known to God alone. But this we can say—that she suffered much, because Our Lord gave her a large share in His Cross as He always does to His best friends. She had accustomed herself from babyhood to do God's Will rather than her own, so it is not difficult to imagine what she was like in the convent. The spirit in which she served God is best shown in her own words.

"Oh, my dear Jesus," she said to Our Lord, "I can only prove my love for You by strewing flowers—that is, by never letting slip an opportunity of prayer, of self-denial, of raising my heart to You. I wish to do my smallest actions for Your love. For Your sake, I wish to suffer and to rejoice: so shall I strew my flowers. I will sing though I have to gather my roses in the midst of thorns, and the longer and sharper the thorns, the sweeter shall grow my song."

We have seen how Thérèse loved her father. She

loved God in the same childlike way, never refusing Him anything, always trying to please Him. She thanked Him just as much for her sorrows as for her joys, because she was sure that whatever He sent was the best. She offered her heart to Him to receive the love which had been despised and rejected by sinners. "Dearest Jesus," she would say, "men do not love You, but I want to love You for them. Give me the love which they refuse, and thus You will be consoled for their ingratitude." Our Lord is never outdone in generosity, and has paid in glory all she gave Him in love.

A PICTURE SYMBOLIC OF THE INTERIOR LIFE OF LITTLE THÉRÈSE. (SHE IS STREWING FLOWERS UNDER THE FEET OF THE HOLY CHILD.)

The reward was not long delayed. After eight years of religious life, Thérèse fell ill of consumption. It was a painful illness, but she bore her long sufferings

with heroic patience. She received the Last Sacraments full of joy at the thought that her life on earth was drawing to a close, and that death was about to open to her the gates of eternal life, and realize her desire of making God better known and loved to the end of time.

THE HAPPY DAY CAME AT LAST.

The happy day came at last. It was Thursday, September 30, 1897.

As the Convent bell rang the evening Angelus, she fixed her eyes lovingly on the miraculous statue, which had been placed at the foot of her bed. Our Lady surely came again to smile on her, for Thérèse had so often said:

> "O thou who cam'st to smile on me in the morning of my life,
> Come, Mother, once again and smile—for lo! 'tis eventide!"

Her last words were:

"*My God, I love Thee!*" They were the faithful echo of her life of twenty-four years.

SURELY THE HOLY CHILD HELD OUT HIS ARMS TO HER, AND THE ANGELS CAME IN THRONGS TO GREET THE "LITTLE QUEEN."

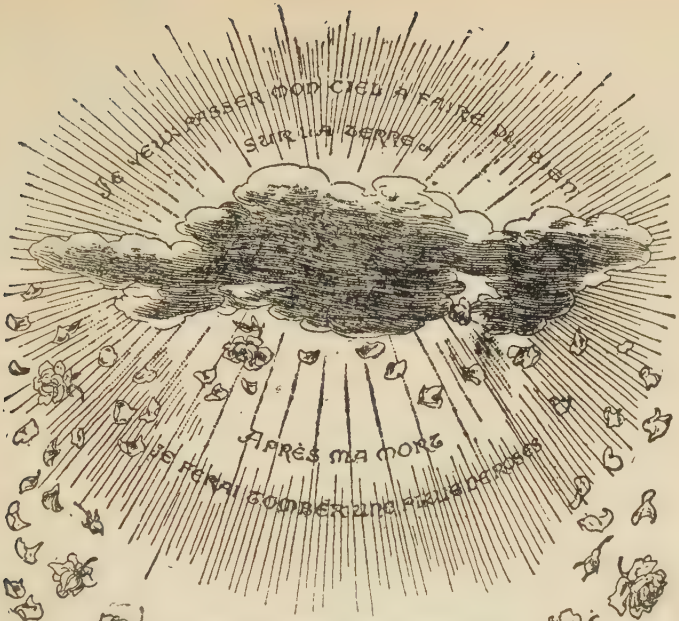
As soon as she was dead, several wonderful things were said to have happened in the convent.

A sick nun was cured by kissing her feet; others saw in the sky a ray of light and a luminous crown; the whole house was filled with mysterious perfumes.

And all remarked that the face of their holy sister was lit up with a radiant smile, as if she already saw the myriad roses which she would rain on

the earth, and the countless "little souls" who would follow her to Heaven, after having imitated her virtues.

You may ask, children, why such power has been given to one whose life was so short and so simple. But when you hear the marvellous words which we have from her own lips—that "*from the age of three*" she "*never refused God anything*"—you will understand something of the extraordinary fidelity which God has crowned in the life of Sœur Thérèse of Lisieux.



"I WANT TO SPEND MY HEAVEN DOING GOOD ON EARTH."

"AFTER MY DEATH I WILL LET FALL A SHOWER OF ROSES."

A FEW PETALS
FROM THE
SHOWER OF ROSES FOR CHILDREN

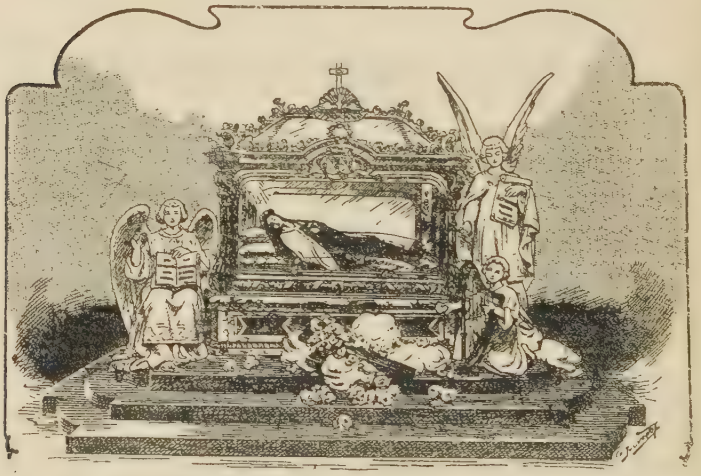
THE SHOWER OF ROSES

SEVERAL years have passed since little Thérèse of the Child Jesus went to Heaven, and the Church has now declared her a Saint and raised her to the altars.

She passed through this world humble, self-effacing, and unnoticed. God had made her understand that true greatness is that heavenly glory which He gives only to those who shun pride and vanity. Thérèse obeyed this inspiration, and God, in return, kept His promise royally.

Even on earth He has exalted her name. Everything that she used has become a precious relic. Numberless pilgrims visit the house where she was born, and Les Buissonnets where she grew up, especially the room where Our Lady cured her in her childhood.

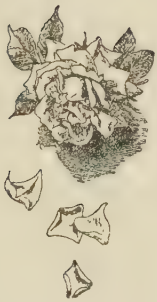
At Carmel prelates kneel in her humble cell and kiss the ground on which she trod. Until her Beatification an ever-increasing crowd of pilgrims went daily to her grave. Now they go to the Chapel of Carmel to venerate her relics enclosed in a beautiful casket. This is because God



THE SHRINE OF SAINT THÉRÈSE

does wonderful things for those who invoke Him in the name of His faithful and loving little Spouse. She had said: "God will do everything I want in Heaven because I have never done my own will on earth. I will let fall a shower of roses. I will spend my Heaven doing good on earth."

Among these countless favours there are some, dear children, which will particularly interest you. Saint Thérèse once said, speaking of little children: "They shall all be under my rule." You shall see how this gracious Queen exercises her authority.



St Thérèse of the Child Jesus covering her Crucifix with Roses.

To face page 170.

Cure of Two Little Negroes.

In the distant island of Madagascar a little black baby lay dying. A missionary nun gave his mother a picture of Sœur Thérèse, telling her to pray. A few days later, the mother brought the child back well and strong. Showing the picture the nun had given her, she said: "The beautiful lady cured my baby during the night. I thought he was dead, and I was crying. . . . Then she came, carrying a white robe which she put on him, and when he awoke he was perfectly cured."

In the same island, there was another poor little baby whose body was covered with dreadful sores. The Sister, after baptizing him, gave his parents a picture of

Sœur Thérèse, telling them to pray to her. Nothing more was heard of the sick baby and they thought at the mission-house that he must be dead. What was their surprise a fortnight later to see him healthy and sound! The mother, on being questioned, pointed to a picture of Thérèse, wrapped in a piece of rag, which was hanging round the child's neck. "Since I put that picture there," she said, "the sores have suddenly healed."

Cure of a Little Negress.

Here is another touching story from the missions, told by a bishop of South Africa.

A poor negress died in November, 1923, leaving three little orphans. The eldest, Katherine Africander, aged five, had never walked, for her legs were completely twisted and her knees quite stiff. One of her brothers had died at the age of six of the same kind of paralysis.

The three motherless children were sent to the Oblate Sisters at Madjeskloof. It was a heavy burden for the Orphanage, but the Superior, after praying to little Thérèse, the missionaries' friend, received providential assistance to aid her in the work of charity. Nevertheless, Katherine's helpless condition was still a great difficulty. There was already so much work to be done in

the school that the few mistresses could not constantly be looking after the little cripple. What was to be done? Would they have to give her up? In this perplexity the Superior, Sister Frances Teresa, decided again to have recourse to Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, the "Little Flower." Accordingly, on December 5, 1923, Katherine was taken to church, and while the nuns and the pupils said the prayers of the Novena, the child kept on repeating: "Little Flower of Jesus, make me walk." The next day they all met once more in church, and when they returned what was their joy when suddenly they saw Katherine stand up! Encouraged by this first success, the prayers on the third day of the Novena were said with redoubled fervour. The little negress was near the altar when the Superior, moved by a sudden impulse, made the child stand up again, and going a few steps away from her showed her a picture of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, and said to her: "Come, Katherine, and get this picture." Immediately the child walked towards her and took the picture from her. The feelings of all present may be imagined. The little girl was completely cured, and walked back to the Orphanage, which was at some distance from the church. She loves her heavenly friend, and often goes to sleep at night holding the

Saint's picture in her hand, and she tells everyone that it is "Little Flower" who has made her walk.

Two non-Catholic doctors have attested this miraculous cure, and one of them even declares that it is very similar to the cures effected at Lourdes. This grace is a striking proof that Saint Thérèse looks after little black children.

A Young Girl Loses Money and Finds it in her Hand.

Nellie Parker, a young girl of fifteen, a recent convert, was sent by the Reverend Mother of a Convent in America to pay a bill in the neighbourhood and to do some shopping.

Nellie lost a quarter dollar and was very upset, thinking she would be called very careless, especially as it was not the first time she had lost money. So she asked Saint Thérèse to let her find the missing sum, and carefully retraced her steps, praying all the time, but without success. When she reached the Convent there was nothing to be done but to go to the Reverend Mother and tell her what had happened. Nellie, with a very heavy heart, was on her way to do this, when

all of a sudden she felt the money fall into her hand. Where had it come from? She had nothing in her purse. Her sleeves were short and she was not wearing gloves. Humanly speaking, it was impossible to explain the marvel. It could only have been little Thérèse who had given Nellie what she had asked for so simply.

Saint Thérèse's Rose-Tree.

In the Orange River Colony (South Africa) all the Catholic children sent a petition to the Pope begging that Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus might be given to them as their special Patroness. This is what she did for them in return. A missionary nun tells the story. "Our children," she writes, "were keeping the month of the Sacred Heart, and every day they delighted in adorning the altar with their most beautiful roses. But soon the supply was exhausted, and they seemed likely to be left without any flowers at all. There was, indeed, a rose-bush in the garden, but so stunted and withered that for six years it had seemed half dead, and we were thinking of pulling it up. What was to be done? In this extremity the children turned to Saint Thérèse. 'We must ask her to make the rose-bush alive again,' suggested one of the youngest.

Immediately they set to work to pray, and began a Novena with great confidence, for they all knew about 'little Thérèse' and her 'roses.'

"On the morning of the third day buds were actually seen on the bush! Others quickly followed, and soon the children were able to gather roses of a beautiful colour and exquisite fragrance from the miraculous tree. The flowers continued to bloom until the end of the month of the Sacred Heart. This marvel made a great stir in the whole countryside. The Bishop himself spoke of it to the Carmelites at Lisieux, and told them that since then 'Saint Thérèse's rose-tree bears flowers every summer.'"

A Baby who was Found Unhurt in the Midst of a Fire.

"Ménil-sur-Belvitte (Vosges).
"*September*, 1913.

"I have received innumerable graces through the intercession of Sœur Thérèse, and I wish to show my gratitude by making known one which I consider miraculous.

"On September 9, 1913, I was working at a little distance from the house where I had left my little girl Anne-Marie, aged two and a half, asleep. Suddenly,

I felt myself compelled, as if by an unseen force, to return to her. Without understanding why I did so, I went back to the house, to find thick smoke issuing from the door. I rushed up to my little girl's room, which was filled with such dense smoke that I could with great difficulty find the window. When I had opened it and the smoke had cleared a little, I saw to my horror that the bed on which the child lay was on fire. Snatching up an eiderdown, I threw it on the flames, and as I did so I felt two little arms round my neck and heard my darling's voice saying: 'I am so hot, Mamma!' She was kneeling on the bed fearlessly watching the flames, which had stopped short at the spot where she knelt. Not a single hair had been burnt; her little nightdress was not even scorched.

"This was the cause of the accident. The child had awaked and begun to play with an oil-lamp which she found on a shelf. She had managed to light the lamp, which exploded and burst into flame. The heat was so intense that it melted the iron stand of the lamp. Only a miraculous protection could have kept the child safe and sound, when the eiderdown, the pillows, counterpane, sheets, and even the mattress, were in flames around her. Humanly speaking, it was impossible that the jets of burning spirit, which had made big holes

in her eiderdown, should have spared her face and her body. Without doubt the child had repeated in the moment of danger the prayer which she said every day on awaking: 'Good-morning, my little Thérèse; come and help me!' She must have called to *her* Thérèse when she saw the fire. We have a proof of this because, ever since the accident, she says each evening, without anyone having suggested it to her: 'Thank you, Thérèse, for not having let me be burnt!' It is very touching to hear this childlike and spontaneous 'Thank you.'

"May the dear Saint continue to protect my child and her five little brothers and sisters!

"DENISE HENRY (*the child's mother*).
"PAUL HENRY (*her father*).
"MARIE HENRY (*her grandmother*)."

"I, the undersigned, priest of Ménil-sur-Belvitte, confirm the marvellous episode related above, for the glory of Sœur Thérèse of the Child Jesus, who is much invoked in my parish.

"ALPH. COLLÉ (*priest*)."

Change Wrought in a Child whose Difficult Character was a Source of Anxiety to her Family.

My wife and I were very grieved by the difficult character of our younger daughter, aged twelve. Her laziness seemed incorrigible, and her spirit of contradiction had reached a pitch which made us uneasy for the future. We were at a loss as to how we could correct these dangerous faults, when we had the idea of having recourse to Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus. We confided our child to her, promising to send an offering to Carmel if she would intercede for us. The answer was wonderful. A few days after this promise our child's character completely changed. To the great astonishment of everyone, she became sweet, affectionate, and docile. Since then she has worked hard at her lessons, and whereas before she was the torment of the family, she is now its joy. This all took place several months ago, but we are still overwhelmed by it, because the rapidity with which the change was worked was, we consider, nothing short of miraculous.

Mysterious Flowers.

The "children's Queen" does not only listen to those who pray to her: she sometimes shows herself to them.

It was in Ireland, and the mother of three children lay dying. She had received the Last Sacraments, and all hope seemed gone, when a friend told the eldest little girl, aged four, to ask the Little Flower to cure her mother, and to promise, in return, to offer her First Communion in the Saint's honour. The next day, the child came into her mother's room carrying six snowdrops of remarkable beauty which she laid on the bed without saying a word. They were put into a vase and placed on the altar which had been prepared that morning for the sick woman's communion. Nobody troubled to think where the flowers had come from, until suddenly the whole room was filled with a most exquisite perfume. To the astonishment of all present, it was found to come from the snowdrops, flowers which by nature are entirely without scent. The little girl was sent for and asked where she had got the flowers. She answered quite simply that a nun had come down from Heaven and had given them to her, promising that her mother would

be cured. "And then *she flew away!*" added the child naïvely.

The mother recovered and no one doubted that it was Sœur Thérèse herself who had come to give the little girl the answer to all the prayers which had been offered for the dying woman.

A Wonder-Working Caress.

"Compiègne (Oise).
"*September* 15, 1912.

"On the evening of September 4, 1912, my little Francis, aged three and a half, was suddenly seized, while going to bed, with a very high fever. He had shivering fits and complained very much of pains in his back. His breathing was difficult and he seemed very exhausted; everything pointed to bronchial pneumonia. My husband, who is a soldier, had to leave that night for a fortnight's manœuvres, and I was terrified at the prospect of a serious illness in his absence. As my little boy kept repeating that his back hurt, I said: 'All right, we will ask little Thérèse to make it well.' 'That was just what I was going to say to you, Mummy,' he answered.

"The night was terrible. My husband left at 4.30 a.m. I did not go to bed again, and wrote to the Carmel

at Lisieux for a relic. At 7 the child awoke, and said: 'You know, Mummy, I saw little Thérèse in the night; she was near my bed, she patted me like this' (he stroked his left cheek to show me how), 'and she said she would make me better. And then I *was* better!' . . . And he added: 'So you see I *am*,' as though he would have said: 'It was as easy as anything.'

"The doctor only arrived in the course of the morning, and as the fever had gone he seemed surprised that we had sent for him again, and told me to let the child get up.

"My husband had been so anxious that at his first halt, 20 kilometres away, he sent a soldier cyclist back to bring him news. Our little Francis is so simple and sweet when he says his prayers that I do not wonder at Saint Thérèse having obtained a miracle for him from the Holy Child."

A Favoured Child.

"Indre et Loire.
"*December* 9, 1912.

"On November 21 my little boy of four and a half fell seriously ill of bronchial pneumonia. My husband and I at once confided him to Sœur Thérèse. I put a relic on him and we began a novena to her. The little fellow loved her, and when he was delirious kept repeating her name.

"At the end of three days an improvement set in; by the fifth day his temperature was normal, and he was soon quite well. Another wonderful thing happened during the novena. Since he was six months old my little boy had refused to take milk; in fact, he disliked it so much that he could not even bear to look at it. Consequently we did not know how to feed him during his illness, especially as we could only get him to take medicine with great difficulty. But one day, when he had begun to get better, he said to us: 'Mummy, I have seen little Thérèse, and she said: "Be a good boy, drink your milk and take your medicine."' From that day he has taken his medicine without any trouble, even asking for it if we forget to give it to him. But, more wonderful still, he really enjoys his milk!

"He keeps saying: 'Sœur Thérèse *was* pretty.' I had put near him a picture of the little Saint as a nun and another as a first communicant. He told us that during the night she had come in her First Communion dress and had *whispered* into his ear, and that he had seen her picture framed in beautiful white roses."

(*Signatures of the father and mother.*)

Double Cure of a Child Suffering from Pott's Disease and of her Paralyzed Mother.

The Noel family of Caen consisted, in 1912, of father, mother, and a little daughter of seven, called Hélène.

The father, a diver by profession, had lost the use of his right arm as the result of an accident. On March 31, 1911, while working at the new jetty of the Orne, he was carried away by the current and fell into a deep hole, where he remained for nine hours in the most critical and dangerous situation. When Madame Noel was told, she insisted on going to the spot. But the shock was so great that she became paralysed in the left arm and in the legs, which, being twisted inwards, made her state still more painful.

As a climax, little Hélène was attacked on July 22, 1911, with a spinal complaint (Pott's disease), and she also lost the use of her legs. Her body became contorted, the shoulders reached the level of her ears, and two bones at the top of the vertebral column were displaced.

The pitiable state of the family excited the compassion of the good parish priest, Canon Legrand, and he asked the district nursing nun to visit them as soon as possible. The Sister, very much distressed at their sad plight, pleaded their cause with one of the religious

communities of the town. At Monsieur Noel's first visit to the Convent he was advised to have recourse with confidence to the powerful intercession of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, and to begin a Novena that very evening (March 27, 1912), begging her to use her wonderful power in Heaven on behalf of poor Madame Noel. A promise was made on the spot to take the invalid on a pilgrimage to Lisieux if her cure was obtained. On his return home, Mr. Noel put a relic of the Saint on his wife, and parents and child, with touching fervour, begged the protection of her who, until then, had been a stranger to them. From the commencement of the Novena a slight improvement was noticeable in the general condition of the patient; she was able to retain food, which she had not done since her illness. On April 2, the seventh day of the Novena, Madame Noel, seeing a cripple passing her window dragging himself along painfully on crutches, said to herself: "To think that perhaps some day I shall walk like that! . . . and my little girl too!" At that instant she heard the words: "Walk! You shall walk without crutches!" Overwhelmed with surprise, she turned to her old mother, who was sitting by her, and said with conviction: "I feel I must walk. Someone is telling me to." "I beg of you, Marie, not to walk alone," answered the mother,

"for if you fall I cannot possibly help you up again." But nothing could stop Madame Noel. Obeying a superior force she got up and went six times round the room, to the amazement of her mother, who could not believe her eyes and thought she must be dreaming. The sick woman declared afterwards that she had felt a hand supporting her and guiding her steps. From that day she has been able to do her ordinary work, and she has had the consolation of going on foot to the grave of her Benefactress.

This is not all: Saint Thérèse came once again into this privileged family, this time on behalf of the child. Little Hélène had been for ten months lying immovable on a board. She had even had to make her First Communion in this painful position. Two Novenas in succession produced no change in her state; her legs remained as stiff as iron bars. Without losing confidence they began a third Novena, during which the child became so ill that for a time they feared poisoning, and the poor father thought the end had come. In his grief he went once more to the Convent. "Do not lose hope," they said, "Sœur Thérèse knows what she is about." And, indeed, on May 18, the last day of the third Novena, about 4 p.m., the child called to her father: "Daddy, lift me up, I must walk." The father refused, but the

child insisted until she got her own way. As soon as she was on the ground she began to walk quickly, and went several times round the room "to make sure," she said, "that she was quite cured." When asked how she knew she would be cured, she answered simply that she had heard a strong, sweet voice calling her by name, and saying to her: "Hélène, walk. You shall walk alone." The child was completely cured. Not only had she recovered the use of her legs, but her shoulders had resumed the normal height, the two projecting bones had fallen into place, and all pain had disappeared.

Since then Hélène continues able to walk and to run, and she prays in a touching way to her Patroness, whom she declares she loves "with her whole heart."

Some charitable persons who were interested in this poor family gave them the means of fulfilling their promise, and on September 10, 1912, they went to the grave of Saint Thérèse to offer their grateful thanks.

The Sudden Cure of a Dying Child after Sœur Thérèse had appeared to her.

A nun writes as follows:

"A grateful mother has asked me to write an account of the cure of her little girl Agatha, aged three,

of double pneumonia. The family have a great devotion to Sœur Thérèse, and the whole time little Agatha was ill she would not allow anyone to take Thérèse's picture from her. Even when they were changing her clothes or making her bed she still hugged her treasure tight.

"The doctor had given her up, but in the midst of terrible convulsions, if her parents called to her, the child would open her eyes, and answer: 'Little Thérèse will make me well.' One night, after a very severe attack, the little head fell back, the eyes closed, and she lay there icy cold and motionless. Everyone thought she was dead, but the poor father, in an agony of grief, laid the picture of Sœur Thérèse on the pillow and prayed aloud to her to save his child. The mother and those kneeling around joined their prayers with his. After about half an hour of terrible suspense, the father called the child by her name and showed her the picture of Sœur Thérèse. Suddenly, to the amazement of all present, the little one opened her eyes, saying: 'Little Thérèse has made me well.' Then, turning to her father, she said: 'Papa, I have seen little Thérèse. She is *so* pretty! All white—all white! It is she who has made me well.'

"It was a complete cure. No trace of her illness

remained, except a slight weakness, which gradually disappeared. The child has not forgotten the heavenly vision with which she was favoured. Even now, after a year has elapsed, she will answer those who ask her if she knows Sœur Thérèse: 'Little Thérèse? Oh yes! She is *so* pretty—all white!' She wears a medal of the Servant of God, and always tells her her childish troubles and asks her for all she wants."

"I have read the above account of the cure of my little Agatha and certify that it is perfectly correct.

"PANICCIA ARDUINO (*father of the child*).

"MARIANNA ARCESI I PANICCIA (*her mother*)."

"LITTLE THÉRÈSE CAME OUT OF THE PICTURE."

At Cette, in the south of France, little Juliette Sompayrac, aged three and a half, fell dangerously ill in January, 1921. The doctor tried various remedies, but soon told the parents that their child had meningitis and that there was no hope of saving her. "I will write to the Convent of Sœur Thérèse of the Child Jesus," said Madame Sompayrac, "and I am sure that she will obtain a miracle for us." The letter was sent at once to Lisieux, and the result awaited with confidence.

On January 13 the child, who was very ill and semi-conscious, all at once ceased her heartrending cries, sat up in bed, and said to her grandmother, who was watching by her: "Sœur Thérèse's little Jesus will cure me to-morrow." The following afternoon she called her mother. "Mummy," she said, smiling, "Sœur Thérèse has cured me. I saw her like *that*," and she pointed to the picture of the Saint covering the crucifix with roses, which hung at the foot of her bed.

"You saw the picture, darling," answered her mother. But the child insisted: "No, I didn't; she came out of the picture, and she kissed me, and then she went back again."

Little Saint Thérèse had indeed "come out," for the doctor, at his next visit, declared that the dying child had been cured miraculously.

"She Gave Me a Lovely White Rose."

Here is a still more touching story. Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus promised a "shower of roses"—that is, many graces. Sometimes she brings from Heaven mysterious roses as the sign of a miracle to follow.

In the month of January, 1921, a little Irish girl, called Laura Fitchett, was seriously ill and was lying

motionless and unconscious, apparently more dead than alive. Suddenly her mother and several persons who were present saw her sit up, join her hands, and recite aloud the Hail Mary. Then, turning to her mother, she said: "The little Flower of Jesus has come and cured me. She called me by my name and told me to sit up and to say three Hail Marys to Our Lady, who was with her. Then she gave me a lovely white rose, and she took my hand and said, 'Good-bye,' and then she smiled and said, 'You are cured.'"

It was true. The petals of the heavenly "rose" had fallen on Laura, who at once got up perfectly well.

A Group of Children offer Themselves, like Thérèse, to the Merciful Love of God.

Here is a story of a different kind which I would like you to know, because it is about children of your own age.

On June 9, 1913, nine little girls and three little boys of a school in England made their First Communion. Most of them were six years of age; the eldest were seven or eight.

In this convent, the mistresses and pupils have a great love for Sœur Thérèse. In the afternoon, therefore, after the renewal of baptismal vows and the act of

consecration to Our Lady, one of the little first communicants read, for herself, and the other children, the little Saint's Act of Offering to the Merciful Love of God.

By a happy coincidence, it was the anniversary of the day on which Sœur Thérèse herself had made it—June 9, 1895.

The school has since been transformed into—a regiment! It is the army of the Holy Child. Sœur Thérèse is its General, and in order to please her, to imitate her virtues and to join her staff, the new soldiers are ready to perform brave deeds. This is what they mean to do. One of the children writes:

"All the pupils in our school are soldiers. Our armour is pure white, kept spotless by Holy Communion, and our weapons are made of the hard metal of little sacrifices. We have not only to march, but to perform deeds that cost. In the early morning, when it is cold and dark and bed is so comfortable and warm, as soon as the bell rings for us to get up, our General, the Little Flower of Jesus, whispers in our ear: 'Get up, little soldier; now is the time to win your spurs.'

"When lessons are hard, when study seems long and we feel inclined to grumble, the little soldiers must use their weapons and set to work willingly and silently."

In spite of this strict discipline, all the pupils have enlisted, Protestants as well as Catholics. There are special rules for the former.

Lastly, I want to show you how "little Thérèse" specially loves children who are preparing for their First Communion. She is happy to see Our Lord coming to their innocent hearts.

Cure of a Child on the Eve of his First Communion.

In a thickly populated quarter of the town of Boulogne-sur-Mer a pious lady, named Mlle. Constance Cardon, had a class for children who were backward in catechism. In April, 1915, a poor woman brought her little boy in an almost dying condition, so that the kind lady might prepare him to make his First Communion as soon as possible. The child's name was Arthur Pottot. He was eight and a half, and from the age of five he had been disfigured by a tumour in the cheek. His jaw-bone was gradually decaying, and, at the time of which we are speaking, he had five large running abscesses. He was so unsightly that he was known in the neighbourhood as "the little rhinoceros."

Full of pity, Mlle. Cardon took Arthur among her protégés, and until July, 1915, she instructed him in the principal truths of religion. She longed so much to get him the grace of receiving Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament that she asked all her little pupils to make a Novena for this intention to Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, the special friend of children. You will see how God rewarded the zeal of this kind lady and the faith of Arthur's mother, who did not want him to die before having made his First Communion.

The Novena ended on July 5, but without bringing about any result. However, far from being discouraged, prayer and confidence were redoubled, and on the morning of July 10 Arthur came to catechism with his bandage in his hand, perfectly cured! In the night all the abscesses had healed, the bone which had grown through the lip had fallen away, and not a single scar remained! In the presence of such a marvel, the pious mistress and her children, overflowing with joy, knelt down and sang the Magnificat all together. Then Arthur's companions, taking him by the hand, rushed into the street, and flinging open the doors of the houses, shouted out: "We have done a miracle! Come and see Arthur; he is quite well." And the privileged boy joined in: "Yes, I am quite well; Sœur Thérèse has cured me!"

His mother was there crying with happiness. The following day, July 11, Arthur made his First Communion with his little companions. He has been very well ever since, and has never forgotten Saint Thérèse, who cured him.

You know something now, dear children, of the power and goodness of your kind Patroness. Go to her in your needs, for she has promised to hear your prayers. And remember, you children are her favourites. She used to love to recall the Gospel scene in which Our Lord, after having caressed and blessed the Galilean children of your own age, said to His astonished disciples: "Unless you become as little children you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." So during her whole life Saint Thérèse tried to be little and simple with God, and to go to Him with the same trust as you go to your parents. Ask her to make you understand Our Lord's lesson in the same way; and that you, too, may become the special friends of God, try to imitate Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus.

PRAYER IN HONOUR OF SAINT THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS TO OBTAIN GRACES THROUGH HER INTERCESSION.

O Father in Heaven, who through Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus dost will to remind the world of the merciful Love which fills Thy Heart and the confidence we ought to have in Thee; we humbly thank Thee for having bestowed so many graces on her who was always Thy devoted child, and for having given her a marvellous power of drawing to Thee a great number of souls who will praise Thee eternally.

"Little Saint Thérèse," remember your promise of "doing good on earth"; let fall your "shower of roses" on those who invoke you, and obtain for us from God the graces that we expect from His infinite goodness.

O God, who by Thy Spirit of Love didst fire the soul of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, grant unto us also to love Thee and to make Thee much loved.

Those persons who obtain favours through the intercession of the Saint are asked to send an account of them to the Carmelite Convent, Lisieux (Calvados), France.